

Defining the landscape:

Contesting values among organic farmers and the tourist sector in Corsica

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Master thesis

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Defining the landscape: Contesting values among organic farmers and the tourist sector in
Corsica

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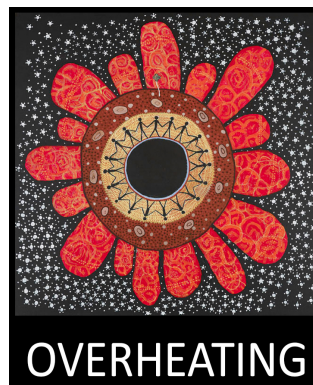
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Abstract

Based on fieldwork among organic farmers in Corsica, I explore the values, practices and actions emerging in the interface between tourism and organic agriculture. Both of these domains make up the two grand economic pillars in Corsica. However, in the last 50 years, tourism has been exerting more and more pressure on land in the form of urbanization and construction. Today, young farmers struggle to gain access to land, while farmers who already own land are being pressured to sell. I argue that these organic farmers inhabit a value system that is in direct opposition to the project of tourism, and by extension to capitalism. However, the farmers' positioning in the capitalist system creates a dilemma between their ecological values and their need for an income. I argue that for some, agri-tourism stands as a solution to this dilemma, as it can be viewed as a compromise between ecological and economic values. Moreover, agri-tourism is viewed as a possible way to save the Corsican landscape from the threat of urbanization. However, this solution merely conforms to the logic of the capitalist system in the way that it is a technical solution to a systemic problem. Another solution lies in the political decision on land usage. I argue that the interface between agriculture and tourism may be located in the geographical space of the littoral. In this way, land is a means to realize specific values. I seek to show that the conflict between agriculture and tourism revolves around the definition of land and its function, and thus which values this natural resource should reflect. This is a task for politicians, who have the political power to define land and consequently whether it shall be used for construction or for agriculture. I contend that the local politicians in Corsica are stuck in a "double bind" between the desire to develop and to conserve land. Finally, I argue that the organic movement in Corsica is a movement that aims to define the Corsican landscape by reversing the value hierarchy of capitalism through the implementation of long-term farming practices.

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On a hot day in May, I wait at the train station to be picked up by Christine, a young farmer in her thirties. She arrives in her large white van, which is loaded with grapefruits (*pomelos*) and equipment for the weekly market. Her farm is a tiresome 40-minute walk from the station, but even driving there poses problems. While driving, it was apparent how narrow the road was even by Corsican standards, with steep slopes that proved challenging for her van. Christine tells me that she has travelled all over Corsica in search of land: “It is difficult to find plots of land to cultivate,” she explains. She found this place near the village of *Lesia*¹, as it was not in high demand among other farmers. “Now, I sell my products to the inhabitants of *Lesia*, but also to tourists. There are many tourists in *Lesia*. It is too much (*c’est trop*).” Christine explains that she is looked upon unfavorably (*mal vu*) by the people of *Lesia* since she hosts “WWOOFers²” and is consequently competing with the local camping site close by for tourists. “They think I run a sect here”, she laughs. While driving on the bumpy road, the car jumps up and down, and she occasionally points left and right to different land plots. “I rent from her” she comments with a few pauses. “Here, I cultivate tomatoes”. “I would like to buy this plot, but we’ll see in June”. It struck me how impractical it must be to have different patches of land scattered around the area, especially with these roads. Christine parks her car in front of a white stone house, currently under construction. “Do you live there?” I ask. “No!” she laughs, “that’s my landlord who’s building a hostel (*gîte*) for the tourists.” She guides me down the hills until I see a large yurt and a big open tent. Christine explains that she lives in the yurt while the other tent is used as a kitchen, but that she hopes to be granted permission to build a house here. She shows me around on her terraced land and points up the hill to a fallen shack. “I wanted to build a hen house there, but the mayor wouldn’t give me permission for that.” Already on that first day, Christine’s problems with tourism and land use had become apparent to me.

This thesis will tell the story of organic farmers in Corsica, and tell of their contentious encounters with the tourist industry. I spent 5 1/2 months conducting fieldwork there, trying to unearth the dynamics behind the problematic relationship between these two

¹ The name of the village has been anonymized, as well as all the farmers’ names.

² I gained access to all the farms through the site World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms” (WWOOF): Here, organic farmers post adds searching for help on their farm. In exchange for their labor, the volunteers are provided with room and board.

economic domains. Tourism and agriculture make up the two grand economic pillars in Corsica. However, in the last 50 years tourism has been exerting more pressure on land in the form of urbanization and construction. As a consequence, agriculture has decreased substantially. Besides my obvious interest in the farmers and their situation, what further concerned me about the relationship between these two domains is that they to a large degree represent two opposing and contradictory values, namely what I denote as ecological values and economic values. The problematic relation between these two values corresponds to a widespread concern today, namely the quandary of accelerated economic growth for environmental sustainability. Indeed, “one may well argue that the main cultural contradiction of capitalism in the early 21st century is that between growth and sustainability” (Eriksen and Schober n.d.). As sustainable practices for the environment and economic development are often presented as being in opposition, the choice between prioritizing one or the other represent for many actors today a so-called “double-bind” (Bateson 2000) where improvement in one domain will lead to deterioration in the other, and is thus creating a “lose-lose” situation. Therefore, by scrutinizing some of the actions and value productions that unfold between tourism and agriculture in one particular location, we might gain insight into the larger value crisis in the current world.

In order to understand the scope of the “value-crisis”, I ask: What values, practices, and actions concerning Corsica as a landscape among the organic farmers emerge in the interface between organic farming and tourism in Corsica? The term interface in anthropology is today most closely associated with the work of Norman Long. He defines it as “a critical point of intersection or linkage between different social systems, fields or levels of social order where structural discontinuities, based upon differences of normative value and social interest, are most likely to be found” (Long 1989, 2, see also Long 2001, 243). Thus, I aim to look at these “critical points of intersection” between organic agriculture and tourism where there are “structural discontinuities” based upon value differences.

I argue that in the interface between organic agriculture and tourism, a conflict between ecological and economic values emerges. I will show that the organic farmers uphold ecological values that they contrast with the economic values of tourism. By following David Graeber (2001), I will moreover understand values as the way “actions become meaningful to the actor by being incorporated in some larger, social totality- even if in many cases the totality in question exists primarily in the actor’s imagination” (Graeber 2001, xii). To understand this “social totality”, I rely on the value theories of Louis Dumont (1982) who argues that values should be understood as part of a binary system, where one

value is seen as better and thus encompasses the other. This type of “play among multiple, contested universals” may also be described as one kind of “friction” (Tsing 2005, 87). Therefore, instead of talking of “structural discontinuities” (Long 1989, 2), we might be better off talking about “frictions” that occur at the interface between organic farmers and tourism in the particular case I wish to describe. Following this logic, we may ask: What characterizes the value frictions between organic farming and tourism concerning the landscape of Corsica?

Over the last decade, landscape has become a key term within anthropological theory. The concept of landscape proves especially fruitful as it provides a contextualizing frame for human activities by bringing “into alignment the local, national and global” (Stewart and Strathern 2003, 2). Thus, landscapes reflect change, as well as being a part of change themselves (Stewart and Strathern 2003, 4) and are a useful vantage point for studying processes as well as gaining insights into the historicity of a place. Tim Ingold defines landscape as “the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey across the paths connecting them” (1993, 156). Moreover, in the view of Anna Tsing landscapes are social-natural enactments of world-making (Tsing 2015), where landscapes come into life through disturbance (HAU Journal 2015). Through the friction between agriculture and tourism, I will scrutinize the making of the landscape in Corsica, understood as the sum of the natural surroundings of humans, i.e. land, fields, mountains etc., in relation to the activity that it constitutes, i.e. farming, construction etc.

Where might we locate the physical interface, that is where might we trace the “face-to-face encounter” (Long 1989, 2) between organic farmers and representatives of the tourist industry? I argue that the interface between agriculture and tourism in Corsica may be located in the geographical space of the littoral as both domains have a desire to use this space in order to realize their endeavors. In this way, land is a means to realize specific values. How does land, then, relate to the concept of landscape? Karl Polanyi (1944, 72) argues that land is only another word for nature³, but that land also constitutes human relations. For my own purposes I will here understand land as an imperative part of the Corsican landscape, constituted in the social relations and natural surroundings of the farmers. Thus, in the desire to change the landscape, a clear definition of land usage is a good place to start.

Hence, the value friction between tourism and organic agriculture concerning Corsica as a landscape may be concretized around the question of land usage, where this friction

³ Nature will solely be understood as an emic term used by my informants in their perception of their natural surroundings.

constitutes a constant tug of war that is continuously molding the Corsican landscape. This process is baffling in particular because of the opposing stances that organic farmers and proponents of tourism take in developing this landscape. I argue that we may view organic farming in Corsica as a movement concerned with the making of a certain type of landscape based on ecological values. I make this claim on the basis of what I see as the movement's defining feature, namely the strong opposition towards capitalism displayed by its actors. I understand capitalism through the domains my informants most strongly oppose, namely industrial agriculture and mass tourism. Moreover, I understand it as a system solely dominated by economic values such as efficiency and profit. The opposition between organic farming and capitalism is evident in the organic farmers' consciousness around local scale and specific practices concerning waste. The organic movement in Corsica is thus a locally embedded movement highly concerned with environmental practices. Consequently, organic farming is understood here as a local domain that has mostly beneficial, or at least protective effects on the Corsican landscape and that specifically seeks to alleviate human-made disturbances.

By tourism, I specifically mean agri-tourism and the more widespread form of mass-tourism. The mass tourism in question has significant consequences for Corsica, in the form of construction and speculation in real estate and land. These latter aspects directly affect the lives of the farmers. Moreover, agri-tourism should not be seen as a separate entity, but rather as a phenomenon that has emerged as a consequence of mass-tourism. Thus, tourism is understood here as a global domain that has mostly detrimental effects, or at least transformative effects, on the landscape. Consequently, those favoring the preservation of agriculture instead of developing tourism contribute to the movement aimed at preserving the local landscape. As a consequence, agri-tourism is perceived by some as a way to preserve the Corsican landscape and to develop the tourist sector simultaneously. Moreover, although the organic farmers' values and practices oppose the tourist industry, their positioning within a capitalist system places their ecological values at odds with their need for an income. For some, agri-tourism stands as a solution to this dilemma as it can be viewed as a compromise between ecological values and economic values. I argue that this type of solution merely conforms to the logic of capitalism and is only aggravating the problematic relationship between tourism and agriculture.

Another solution is to address the question of land usage by scrutinizing which values it should reflect. This is a task for politicians, who have the power to decide whether land shall be used for construction or agriculture. I argue that local politicians are in reality often

stuck in a “double bind” between the desire to develop and the desire to conserve land. Thus, local politicians are also being pulled in two directions by these two values. I see the double bind between economic issues versus environmental concerns that both local politicians and organic farmers face as emerging from the different actors’ positioning in a capitalist system. In short, this whole conflict is situated in a system dominated by “economic” values that encompass and dominate the ecological ones. The dichotomy of economic versus ecological values corresponds to what Parry and Bloch (1989) have called a short-term and long-term transactional order. They argue that the long-term cycle is always associated with concepts of morality while the short-term cycle is associated with individual gain. We live in a society where the short-term transactional order has encompassed and overtaken the long-term transactional order. As a consequence, even those who wish to prioritize ecological values in their daily lives are at times forced to act upon economic values instead. I argue that it is the land’s potential of realizing values of short and long-term order that makes it “the supreme good of humanity” (Gregory 1997, 114). Moreover, from the natural resource that lies at the interface between organic farming and tourism, namely land, emerges a fight between the processes of “re-embedding” and “dis-embedding” the economy. In order to save the Corsican landscape from the short-term transactional order of tourism, the organic farmers attempt to “re-embed” the economy by implementing the long-term transactional order as the valid one. Finally, I will argue that the organic farming movement in Corsica is part of a movement that tries to reverse the value hierarchy of capitalism in its favor, and thus tries to “re-embed” long-term ecological values into the function of the land.

A Tour of Corsica



Figure 1: Photo: An example of why Corsica is called the “Beautiful Island” as well as “the Mountain in the sea”. The author took this photo during a hike at “Capo Rosso” on the west coast near Porto.



Figure 2: A typical sight in Corsica: A shop advertising local specialties. Photo taken in Corte by the author.

I arrived at the airport in Corsica’s economic capital, Bastia, in late January 2014. When I stepped off the plane, the first thing that hit me was the botanical aroma emanating from the island’s landscape. This would be my first sensory experience of an island that I soon learned also goes by the name of “the Isle of perfumes” (*L’île des parfums*). Inside the airport, I see a space dedicated to an advertisement with the slogan “*Route des Sens*

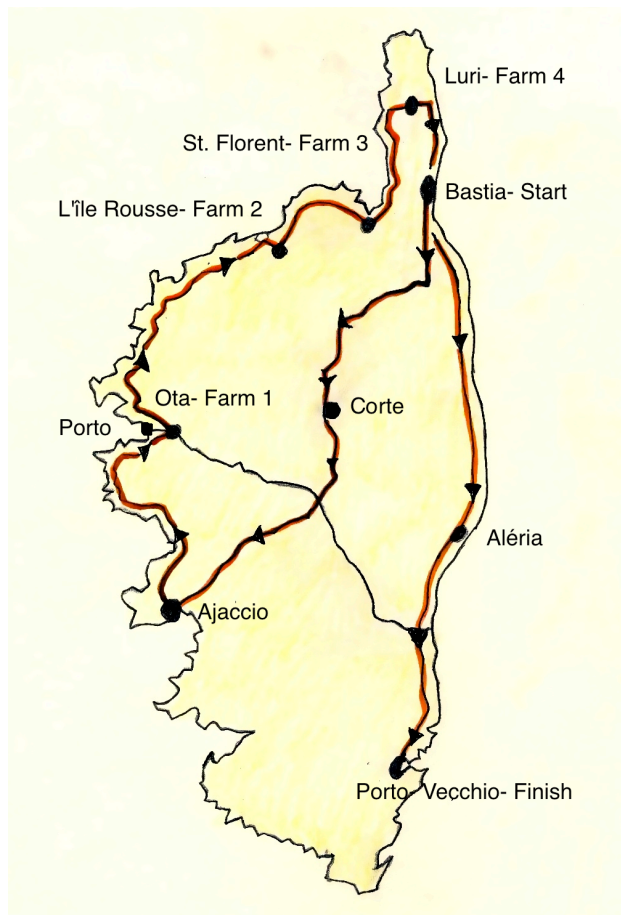


Figure 3: Map displaying the route through the different farms and places I stayed in Corsica.

Authentiques” (the Route of Authentic Senses). The advertisement promotes a tourist route that exists all over Corsica, where you will be guided to different “authentic” farms. I see large pictures displaying different sceneries from Corsica. One is portraying a farmer holding a small baby goat towards his face, looking at it and smiling. Another shows olive trees ready to be harvested, with large nettings lying under the trees, as well as delicate pictures of grapes, citrus fruits and charcuterie. A large electronic book has been placed in the center. Under the slogan are the words “*Gouter, Découvrir, Rencontrer*” (Taste, Explore, Meet). In this book it is possible to read about all the different products produced in Corsica, as well as about Corsican history. One title

simply states “*Qualité et identité*” (quality and identity), the article argues further that “Corsica is abundant with products and knowledge, which is a testimony to its history and of its geographical location in the heart of the Mediterranean” (*La Corse regorge de produits et de savoir-faire qui témoignent de son histoire et de sa situation géographique au Cœur de la Méditerranée*).

From Bastia I have to take the train to Ajaccio, Corsica’s capital. I am excited to catch my first glimpses of the beautiful Corsican nature, of the so-called “Isle of beauty” (*Ile de la Beauté*). Indeed, from the first minute the beautiful green countryside and the breathtaking snowy mountains enchant me. However, at times I see old vehicles as well as industrial ruins adjacent to the road, remnants of a time when industrial activities indeed existed in Corsica. The appearance of small abandoned houses is a bitter sight, a sad reminder of an inland community that once existed there.

The train crosses the mountainous region “Castagniccia”, named after the strong presence of chestnut farmers and production⁴, before it stops in Corte, “the cultural capital of Corsica”. I decide to stay here for one week. The city is beautifully located, surrounded by snow-covered mountains. Walking the streets here I see signs outside the restaurants displaying and advertising the specialties; “*Spécialités Corses: charcuterie, vin, miel, Fromages, Ganistrelli*” (Corsican specialties, charcuterie, wine, honey, cheeses, “Ganistrelli⁵”).

In order to get to my first farm I have to take the bus to the small tourist village of Porto. I am the only one on the small bus that looks more like a van. The bus driver, Nizar, talks me through the landscape of Corsica as he navigates the narrowing roads, before we arrive at the magnificent pink cliffs that tumble into the turquoise sea in the Porto region. Navigating these roads feels like an extreme sport: At every corner you might be greeted by cars coming from the opposite direction at high speed. Now in February, there are luckily few cars on the road, but during the summer Nizar explains, the motto is “honk or die”. I will stay here in Porto for four weeks at a farm located between Porto and Ota⁶. The contrast between these two places could not have been starker. While inland Ota is a traditional Corsican village, Porto is “not a real city, but made for the tourists” as one of my informants poignantly described it. Indeed, during my stay in February, all the shops were closed, and the only sign of life in the streets of Porto were construction workers, immigrants from Tunisia or Morocco.

I continue the trip in a car that I have rented. Courageously steering the car through the winding narrow roads along the west coast, I continue towards Ile Rousse, located in what is called “Corsica’s garden⁷”, namely the region of Balagne. The signs indicating the route of authentic senses pop up everywhere. They advertise the omnipresent farms of honey producers, wine producers, producers of charcuterie, citrus fruits and so on. Indeed, while driving in Corsica, I got the feeling that agriculture is everywhere. I stay in Ile Rousse for seven weeks working on a farm. Leaving Balagne, the ubiquity of farms reaches its culmination as I arrive at the region of “Nebbiu”- not far from the city of St. Florent- where I stay and work on the third farm for three weeks.

⁴ In Corsican, the word for chestnut is “castagnina”

⁵ The Corsican name for a type of Italian biscuit, originally “Canistrelli”

⁶ I have decided, in order to guarantee anonymity, to describe the farms and informants separately from the locations, without making the linkage between people and places.

⁷Garden, or “jardin” in French, was often used to signify agricultural activities

I continue the west-coast route up Cap Corsica, which perfectly illustrates why Corsica is called “*la Montagne dans la mer*” (the mountain in the sea), as indeed the road is carved into the mountains jutting out from the Mediterranean ocean. I cross Cap Corsica by passing the inland city of “Luri”, where I spend three weeks working on a farm. I take the more tourist-friendly eastern route down towards Bastia through the “eastern plains”. I pass the relatively large agricultural plains as well as several hotel complexes. While steep mountains and narrow roads mark the west side of Corsica, the roads on the east coast unfold easily throughout the flat stretch of land there. I end my stay in Porto-Vecchio. If I had had any doubt of the seasonal influx of tourists before, this city would have made such an event abundantly clear to me. After spending three weeks in Porto-Vecchio in July, I leave Corsica filled with impressions of a place with a dual identity: Corsica is mountainous and flat, it is inland and it is coast, it is deserted and overpopulated, it is rural and urban, it is agriculture and it is tourism.

My Fieldwork



Figure 4: The tomato and basil fields at one of the farms. Photo taken by author.



Figure 5: Seedling conservation and seedling sale at “the Green Association”. Photo taken by author.

Keeping the geography of Corsica in mind, I will now move on to contextualize my own presence. In order to gain access to the organic farmers, I decided to use the site “World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms” (WWOOF)⁸. I got a response from a farmer, Pierre, who was very excited to host me on his farm and even envisioned me staying with him for the entire fieldwork. Pierre is Corsican, and his farm has been in his family for generations. He has an olive farm, but also produces other products such as “cédrat”⁹ jelly. I was planning to stay with Pierre for six months. Unfortunately, due to several conflicts about working hours as well as personal differences, I saw no other choice than to leave his farm four weeks

⁸ One may question why I have not included the WWOOFing system in my analysis of values and agri-tourism, as this may be considered as a type of tourism. However, because of the coherent values I found between the WWOOFers and the farmers, I have chosen not to include the WWOOFers in my analysis.

⁹ Cédrat is a particular fruit related to the lemon. In fact, it looks like a gigantic lemon.

into my field research. One may question the extent to which my conflict with Pierre may have skewed the way I present some of my findings from this particular farm; however, all the quotes and opinions taken from the time spent with him come from moments when we were still on good terms.

When I left Pierre's farm, I had no alternate farm where I could work. Instead, I travelled around in Corsica, conducting interviews. In Corte, I conducted two interviews; one with Caroline Tafani, researcher at the university, and one with Jean-Christophe Paoli, researcher at INRA¹⁰. Eventually, I decided to rent an apartment in the city of Bastia for one month where I made contact with the Agricultural Chamber. I conducted two interviews there; one with the director and another with Patricia, a woman in charge of agriculture and tourism. She was empathetic towards my situation in Corsica, and arranged for me to travel with her colleague Michelle during his visits to different farms. Therefore, in March, I visited five different vineyards. I also went with Patricia to visit one distillery and attended one meeting with chestnut farmers in the region of Castagniccia. Although not all of these farmers produced in an organic way, it gave me good insight into the dynamics among farmers in Corsica. Moreover, as I will argue in the next chapter, Corsica is especially well suited for organic farming and I consider the farmers I talked to as upholding values resembling those of the organic farmers. That is, they share the same preservation concerns pertaining to the landscape of Corsica.

In April, I was accepted to a new farm, "the Garden". This farm was run by a couple in their thirties, Jérôme and Corinne. Corinne was Corsican, born and raised in the area, while her husband comes from mainland France. On their farm, there were also several "WWOOF"ers as well as other workers. Elliot and Désirée live on their farm indefinitely; they both come from mainland France, although Elliot's father was Corsican. "The Garden" was run as a farm and a restaurant simultaneously, thus portraying characteristics similar to "agri-tourism".

I left "the Garden" after three weeks to work with Fabien and Jacqueline, at the "Green association". Both of them come from mainland France, and were not familiar with Corsican culture before they moved there. I arrived at the association in May 2014, together with Laura, my friend from Canada who also worked with me as a WWOOFer at the "Garden". This place was not a typical farm like the others as it is run by an organization that works to preserve seedlings and plants. Fabien and Jacqueline were employees, and did not live on the

¹⁰ "Institut national de la recherche agronomique" (National Institute of Agricultural Research).

farm. Likewise, there were no animals there, something Fabien made clear was a requirement for a “real farm”, an issue that I will return to in chapter 3. “This is a farm, but we’re not farmers”, Fabien would say to me, making explicit the difference between them and other farmers in Corsica.

After three weeks, I left the association to work for Christine. For the last five years, she has cultivated her land on her own. Christine is French, but moved to Corsica to study at the University. Christine had a vegetable garden, but also produces honey for her own consumption. She sold her vegetables twice a week at two different markets. I stayed on her farm for six weeks. Through Christine, I became acquainted with several young farmers, and it was here that I acquired most of my current insights into the difficulties that young farmers face regarding access to land.

From “peasant” studies to “post-environmentalism”

As evidenced above, my informants came from a variety of backgrounds except for the fact that they were all farmers. Is this then a “peasant” study? We need to take a moment to consider the analytical concept of “peasant” and its current usage. In “Peasants” (1966, 2), Eric Wolf defines peasants as cultivators integrated into a state-level society (see also Mientjes 2010, 149). Moreover, he argues that peasants “are rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers” (Wolf 1966, 3-4). In Michael Kearney’s “Reconceptualizing the peasant”, we find a somewhat different account as he contends that “whereas the farmer produces exchange value, the peasant primarily produces use value, that is, produces for autoconsumption” (1996, 61). He thus seems to be advocating an understanding of the peasant as a figure mostly existing outside the capitalist system. Other authors, including Wolf, see peasants as “subordinated to large political-economic institutions” (Mientjes 2010, 149). This discussion only goes to show that “discourses on peasants were constructed in a two-dimensional space that is now dissolving under the influences of transnationalism and globalization, which are the ground of a different spatiality in which the distinction between centers and peripheries is eroding” (Kearney 1996, 117). Thus, it can be argued that in today’s world the divide between peasant and farmer is no longer fruitful as we live in an interconnected world where we are all incorporated into the circuits of capital.

Kearney's view on the concept of peasant reflects his argument about what he sees as the key feature of the "global era", namely the erasure between center and periphery and consequently the distinction between rural and urban (Kearney 1996, 3, see also Tsing 2000, 343). Marc Edelman seconds this argument and claims that "in recent years, urban and rural culture have converged in so many ways that it is necessary to consider the possibility of a new, contemporary rural moral economy, informed by an urban imaginary and urban consumption expectations" (2005, 337). Therefore, in my thesis, I will not be using the concept of peasant, but rather scrutinize the "contemporary moral economy" of organic farmers¹¹. Following E.P. Thompson, we may define the moral economy as confrontations in the market place over access to "necessities" (Thompson 1991, 337-338). Here, I will understand this "market place" as the interface between tourism and agriculture. Moreover, in this interface, the farmers are fighting over access to land with the tourism industry. Thus, land may be considered a necessity for both of these domains. Seeing that I locate the physical interface at the littoral coast, the moral economy in Corsica will here be understood as confrontations on land over land.

If we cannot talk about peasants, what is it that connects and groups my informants together? Michael Kearney argues that "a typical feature of New Social Movements is that they bring together socially diverse persons who share one or several political objectives" (Kearney 1996, 181). Indeed, we will see that it is their identity as organic farmers that unite my informants. To further understand the identity of this movement, I suggest that we must look at the urban imaginary and urban consumption expectations that Edelman discusses. This is what I aim to do in chapter three, where I will show that the organic farmers' motivation is constituted in opposition to urban imaginaries of "industrialization" and "capitalism".

In fact, organic farming emerged as a response to a transition from agriculture to agro-businesses. Jeff Pratt argues that the local food movement is "very much a reaction to the real and perceived trends within the 'mainstream' food industry" and to the production methods and food quality of industrial agriculture (Pratt 2009, 155). He continues by arguing that alternative food chains "emerged in parallel with the revolutions in farming and processing;

¹¹ Another reason for discarding the concept of the "peasant" in my case is the implication of its role as a national figure. The farmers I studied were a mixture of Corsican and French and there was thus no coherent ethnic identity among my informants. As a consequence, the concept of "food sovereignty" will not be pertinent either.

their values (such as organic) are not those of a peasantry, but emerge as a counterpart to industrial agriculture and commodification” (2007, 297). In chapter three, we will see what this type of opposition entails, but here, we will briefly discuss some of industrialized agriculture’s characteristics. The first characteristic is a question of scale. Indeed, most of what we buy today from the store is no longer produced locally. In fact, in industrialized countries and in urban areas of the world, we are no longer aware of who produces our food and in what manner it is shipped, or how it arrives on our supermarket shelves (Busch 2004, 165). Moreover, as Lawrence Busch argues, “new technologies and new forms of social organization have led to an enormous increase in scale” (2004, 165). As a consequence of the increase in scale, there has been a change in the overall production practices. Industrial production of vegetables, for example, entails a practice known as monoculture, which requires the usage of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Moreover, through shipping, food travels ever longer distances (Busch 2004, 168-169).

The second characteristic of industrial agriculture may be seen as a direct consequence of the scale of industrial agriculture, namely the massive increase in waste. Colin Sage (2012, 199) points out that “the modern food system (...) has become characterized by a scandalous level of discard and wastage” (Sage 2012: 200). The founder and pioneer of the organic movement, Sir Albert Howard (1873-1947), introduced the idea that would become the foundation of organic farming- namely the importance of recycling all organic waste materials back to the farmland. Of special importance was a good mix of residues from both plant and animals (Heckman 2006, 144). Howard promoted agriculture based on visions of synergy and proper waste management, and it is precisely such concerns over soil fertility, food purity, and environmentalism that shaped the organic farming movement in the 1960s and 70s (Pratt 2009, 157). We will see in chapter three that it is indeed waste management practices that may be a defining feature of organic values. Considering this opposition to industrial agriculture, we may conclude that organic farming imaginaries are not solely urban, but also global.

Based on her fieldwork in Corsica’s neighboring island, Sardinia, Tracey Heatherington argues that “global approaches to ecology and environment constitute a strategic field of imagination within which social and political relations of power are negotiated and naturalized.” Moreover, she understands this “strategic field of imagination” as “dreamtimes” (Heatherington 2010, 21). Heatherington argues that the landscape of Sardinia is being used and exists in these “global dreamtimes of environmentalism” where “signs of locality are remapped and transmuted into potent universals” (Heatherington 2010,

21). Thus, the landscape of Sardinia is used as a political tool to convey universal ideas about the environment. She argues further that “dreamtimes of environmentalism (...) overlay regional geographies with stories evoking the presence of a universal, sacred, transcendent, timeless, and global Nature” (Heatherington 2010, 23). In a similar vein, the farmers in Corsica use Corsican nature in order to express more universal claims that concern the question of what we should do with this earth. As I will argue in the next chapter, the landscape of Corsica fosters these global dreams in this particular setting. I will argue that this is also why it might be more desirable for organic farmers to come to Corsica, as the Corsican identity is closely tied to ideas of environmentalism and nature.

However, although we may roughly consider environmentalism as a movement concerned with the protection of land from the ills of modernity (Krauss 2013, 76), a stance called “Post-environmentalism”, argues that to conserve natural spaces is not enough to face the challenges caused by global climate change. In order to mitigate green house gases and adapt to the effects of a changing climate, we need an active management of landscapes (Krauss 2013, 77). In fact, preservation of land some places only permits capitalist endeavors other places not marked for conservation. In this thesis I will not look at environmentalism in the traditional sense, but rather trace a certain post-environmentalism among the Corsican farmers, seen here as the importance of defining the activities undertaken on the landscape. Beyond a mere conservation, Corsican farmers envision an implementation of ecological values through activities. This study of a global movement, and of global imaginaries acting upon a particular location also raises questions of scale and methodological issues.

A “multi-scalar” field

As the above discussion suggests, this thesis is also a study of globalization. How can we best study this complex and multi-faceted phenomenon? One methodological approach to the study of globalization is to do “multi-sited” fieldwork. One might argue that I ended up conducting multi-sited fieldwork in the sense that I spent time in different geographical locations throughout Corsica. Although my field undoubtedly shares certain characteristics with a multi-sited field¹², I argue that I in fact did a single-site fieldwork. George Marcus

¹² I have for example used some documentaries in order to get a more thorough insight into the wider economic and political context of Corsica. One of my informants gave me a documentary produced in Corsica that dealt with some of the issues at hand. For reasons of anonymity, I will not reveal the name of the documentary, as I

defines multi-sited fieldwork as “designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact defines the argument of the ethnography” (Marcus 1995, 105). For me, this connection among the sites was to follow farmers and people who were prominent figures within the domain of agriculture and tourism in Corsica. However, in discussing multi-sited fieldwork, Marcus himself has in mind a field that stretches over several countries as he viewed the global as the connecting component between the sites (Marcus 1995, 99). I, on the other hand, stayed in one “bounded” place, namely the island of Corsica. Although “the global” is crucial to understand the perspectives and conflicts in Corsica, the connecting component between the various localities is rather their specificity, i.e. their status as organic farms in Corsica. I also consider my field as a single site due to the fact that the organic community is quite small, and everyone knows each other despite of the scattering of farms throughout the island. They all attend a lot of the same meetings organized by the *Centre d’Initiative pour Valoriser l’Agriculture et le Milieu rural* (CIVAM) that also organizes the organic festival in June that Christine and the owners of the “Garden” attended. I thus maintain that the organic community may be considered a more or less cohesive community with relatively consistent views on values, nature and the landscapes of Corsica.

One limitation of changing farms and locations during my field research is that I may not have managed to gain deep insight to each farm during the time I spent there, which may somewhat weaken my conclusions. Ulf Hannerz states that limited time spent at multiple locations may result in conducting interviews rather than acquiring in-depth knowledge (2003, 211). While I did conduct a few interviews with local officials and researchers, my fieldwork was in the end more based on participant observation and informal conversations than formal interviews. Additionally, I felt I acquired detailed insights into the different practices of the local farmers, as I had the chance to compare and contrast their practices, with chapter four being a direct consequence of this. In hindsight, I see the value of the method I used as I do not think I would have had the same insights into “the circulation of cultural meanings, objects, and identities in diffuse time-space” (Marcus 1995, 96) through my original plan of staying with Pierre for six months. Indeed, as Marc Augé argues, “ethnology always has to deal with at least two spaces: that of the place it is studying... and

know the majority of the people portrayed in the film. Moreover, in the discussion of the mafia in the next chapter, I have relied extensively on two documentaries; *Murder Island* (2013) and *Corsica: Lawlessness in heart of Europe* (2013).

the bigger one in which this place is located, the source of influences and constraints which are not without effects on the internal play of local relations” (Augé 1995, 117).

If I indeed had done a single-sited fieldwork, then what method would I have used to address the larger questions of globalization? Instead of arguing that I did multi-sited or single-sited field research, I prefer to view it as a question of conceptualizing the same phenomenon from various scales or perspectives. Using scale in an anthropological analysis may be seen as a “matter of putting a particular perspective to work” (Hastrup 2013, 148). This strategy shows that “the local and the global are not endpoints on any absolute scale; empirically, they are enfolded in each other” (Hastrup 2013, 148). Anna Tsing recommends that we follow two analytic principles in the study of different scales, by first paying “close attention to ideologies of scale, that is cultural claims about locality, regionality, and globality” (2000, 347). In chapter three, I will argue that the values of the farmers are in direct opposition to that of industrial agriculture and by extension, capitalism. By making this argument, I am suggesting that the farmers are situating themselves on a global scale in order to make meaning of their own actions and values. I am thus paying particular attention to what Henriette Hastrup calls “scale of attention”, which is “a concomitant effect of the ethnographic study of social actors whose concerns may outstretch the obviously local” (2013, 149). In chapter four I will move away from a global perspective and we will see that the organic farmers in Corsica situate themselves on a local scale when they judge other organic farmers as more or less consistent with their value-system. Anna Tsing proposes secondly to find what she calls “projects (...) that is, relatively coherent bundles of ideas and practices as realized in particular times and places... to identify projects is to maintain a commitment to localization, even of the biggest world-making dreams and schemes” (2000, 347). Again, one central argument of this thesis is that the farmers are pursuing such projects through their global world-making dreams of reversing the value hierarchy through the usage of land.

Finally, this thesis aims to go beyond the organic farmers’ value system by scrutinizing the actions and values emerging in the interface with tourism. As argued by Neveling and Wergin (2009), scale as a methodological tool may be particularly relevant in the study of tourism as it is one of the central industries shaping understandings of what is global and what is local (315). Thus, in the interface between tourism and agriculture contesting ideas emerge of what is really local and what is global. For the farmers, this raises the difficult question whether it is morally correct to be integrated into the tourist industry, an issue I will explore in chapter five. Therefore, by using scale as an analytical tool we can more easily

analyze the farmers' perspectives on processes that have an influence on their ideals, values and perceptions of the world (Neveling and Wergin 2009, 329).

The trajectory of this thesis

The main premise of this thesis is that there is substantial friction between economic and ecological values among farmers and the tourism industry in Corsica. In chapter two, I wish to trace these values historically in the development of agriculture and tourism. By scrutinizing the making of the Corsican landscape in a historical perspective, it will elucidate what the farmers aim to preserve: a particular landscape that is still relatively free of human destruction. Indeed, I argue that the absence of industrialized activities has made Corsica a suitable place for organic farming as well as an attractive tourist spot. Chapter three and four will be concerned with the farmers' values and practices on a local level. However, they will also reflect the farmers' positioning in a global system of industrial capitalism: In chapter three I ask why organic farmers in Corsica choose to do organic farming and I argue that they see their own actions as meaningful because they are able to compare and situate them within a bigger global society where industrial agriculture and capitalism dominate. Thus, in chapter three I aim to explain the motivation for doing organic farming by scrutinizing the coherent idealized values among the farmers. Moreover, I identify ecological values as comprised by two key values, namely organic and local. Moving beyond an analysis of abstract values, in chapter four I ask what organic agriculture really is, and I will consequently take a closer look at the local practices and dynamics between the local farmers in order to gain a better understanding of this social movement. I aim to show that "organic" is not a well-defined category and that practices corresponding to this term are not necessarily coherent. Although the farmers are unequivocally in opposition to industrial farming that may operate outside the island of Corsica, there are indeed internal differences and areas of frictions. When the farmers compare each other on a local level and leave the globalist imagination aside, they judge others according to the same binary values related to ecology or economy. I argue that the dilemma between these values, experienced by the organic farmers, is a direct consequence of their inextricable position within the capitalist system. This further demonstrates that "in spite of its strong critique of conventional farming, organic farming is becoming incorporated into a system which precisely allows that sort of farming to continue" (Tovey 1997, 36).

Chapters five and six will discuss the impact of tourism and further scrutinize the actions, practices and values that arise in the interface between the farmers and tourism. In chapter five, I will look at the farmers' attempts to both join and reject the tourist industry. I understand the resistance to tourism as a way of rejecting the economic values represented by industrial agriculture. However, since agri-tourism may be seen as a way to unite economic and ecological values, some view it as a way to resolve the conflict between these two sets of values. I will show that the farmers integrated into the logics of tourism emphasize the key values of locality and organic in order to attract tourists. This entails a paradox as the integration into the tourism industry actually leads to the value of locality being broken. I argue that the tourism industry benefits from the fact that the concept of the local is being confused with the environmentally friendly practices of organic agriculture. In fact, the majority of the products sold in Corsica are being sold as a local product to entice tourists, although they are actually imported. This leads to the paradoxical situation where the importance of locality to attract tourists poses a direct threat to actual local agriculture, as increased tourism entails greater pressure on land and agriculture. I argue that some view agri-tourism as the solution to this threat, and that it is consequently seen as a way to save the Corsican landscape. However, this "capitalist solution" to the dilemma between ecology and economy can be seen as but another technical solution, conforming to the logic of capitalism. In chapter six I argue that an alternative solution to this threat of tourism is to directly address the question of land usage. Indeed, as a consequence of the increasing influx of tourists, young farmers today are struggling to gain access to land, and farmers who already do own land are pressured to sell. Local politicians are the ones who have the power to grant building permits, or to designate the land as an agricultural zone. As a consequence, they are often caught between economic and ecological values, and find themselves in a "double bind". Land is thus a physical representation of the interface between agriculture and tourism. I argue that land should be seen as a medium for realizing value and it is this quality that makes it "the supreme good of humanity" (Gregory 1997). I posit that the act of implementing ecological values into the function of land may be seen as an "organic solution" to the dilemma of ecology versus economy. The organic movement in Corsica aims to reverse the value hierarchy of capitalism by defining the landscape in accordance with their ecological values.

Chapter 2: The Organic Island

Corsica has traditionally been an agricultural society. Pierre, an olive farmer, explained that “before the colonization of Corsica you could make good money on the production of olive oil. The villages did well. Then colonization happened and nobody cared about olive oil. You could employ temporary workers to do the job for less money, so the price of olive oil declined. Then it became hard for people to survive on production”. Thomas, an elderly informant explained to me bitterly: “My generation is the last that remembers how Corsica used to be. There were fruit trees everywhere. The olive trees would feed Corsica (*les oliviers ont nourrit la Corse*). Corsica was our garden! (*Toute la Corse était notre jardin*).” The recent history of Corsica is therefore marked by a decline in agriculture. Indeed, over the last 40 years, three-fourths of the agriculture sector has been lost and two-thirds of the farmland has been abandoned. Tourism has subsequently entered as the grand economic savior. Indeed, the island of Corsica is among the most visited tourist destinations in the Mediterranean, with an annual average of 3 million visitors to its 300 000 inhabitants (Tafari, Pieri, and Maupertuis 2014, 110). How did this happen? In this chapter, I will show how the absence of industrialization made way for an increase in tourism following the decline in agriculture. In order to understand this development, it is necessary to grasp the political involvement of the nationalist movement, as well as the role of local criminal “elites” in Corsica. We will see that the nationalist movement has been protective of Corsican agriculture against the speculating forces aiming to develop land. This chapter thus aims to show how the Corsican landscape was shaped through the tug of war between the desire to protect land versus to develop it. We will see that as a consequence of Corsica’s protected coast as well as its lack of industry, Corsica has become an ideal place for organic farmers. However, these same attributes attract tourists. Therefore, continuous frictions and disparities between agriculture and tourism have shaped Corsica’s history as well as its landscape.

Corsica has a long history of being treated as a colonial subject by its numerous conquerors. During the second empire (1852-1870), roughly a century after being annexed by France, Corsica was finally treated as a French department as numerous building projects were initiated and the roads improved. Moreover, tourism arrived in Corsica in 1860 for the first time. Corsica was seen as an extension of the Côte d’Azur, but first and foremost it was the winter destination of a small English clientele (Gay 2014, 31). This is also the only time an effort was made to promote industrialization. A small production of pasta started up in

Bastia, together with important tanneries. Blast furnaces developed with 2500 tons of melting a year in 1853, which reached a capacity of 15 000 after 1860. A few mines were also opened (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 400-401).

Despite such efforts, industrialization did not take hold in Corsica. This point was also made in a documentary I watched at the anthropological museum in Corté. According to the film, Corsica went from a traditional farming society to an economy largely based on tourism without taking the intermediate step of investing in infrastructure, industry and modernization. The mayor of Sisco, Ange-Pierre Vivoni confirms this observation: “Every continent, every island in the world has had some kind of transition. That didn’t happen here, we went from living as peasants to being obsessed by gain” (ABC 2013). This development corresponds to what Michael Hardt calls a transition from an economy based on agriculture to an economy based on “providing services and manipulating information” (Hardt 1999, 90). Hardt argues that in Europe, the latter was typically preceded by a middle phase, what he calls “economic modernization” (Hardt 1999, 90), i.e. the economic transition from agriculture to that of industry. Corsica has thus skipped or only lightly touched upon economic modernization or industrialization. Reality is obviously not as clear-cut as this categorization implies, but the case could be made that Corsica never followed the same development path that Hardt claims the rest of Europe has. Neveling and Wergin (2009) argue further that tourism has often moved up on the development agenda of governments when efforts to establish manufacturing industries either ended or failed (329). This is exactly what took place once the economy of Corsica entered a crisis during the World Wars.

The World Wars and development efforts

*The First World War was a disaster*¹³

Farmer

The First World War is an event that has left a lasting imprint on Corsica’s collective memory. Indeed, the war represented a demographic catastrophe for the Corsican population, with as many as thirty to forty thousand Corsicans killed in battle (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 418). Consequently, the economy of the island, still essentially a farming society, lost much

¹³ Quote is taken from documentary given to me by an informant

of its labor force (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 423). The traditional economy was at its lowest point and the island became more dependent on the mainland as a consequence (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 418-419). After the Second World War, the loss of colonies drove France towards developing its poorest zone. At this point the economic situation of Corsica was deplorable: the island's population was at an all time low, the remaining population was aging, the villages were deserted and traditional agriculture had basically collapsed (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 441). As a solution, the state focused on Corsica's two main prospects for development: agriculture and tourism. In 1957, the government created two economic societies, SOMIVAC (Société de mise en valeur de la Corse) and "SETCO" (Société pour l'équipement touristique de la Corse). SOMIVAC put its efforts into a modernization of agriculture by creating large plantations on the plain in the east. SETCO, on the other hand, focused on the development of the littoral, thereby enabling the arrival of an intensive tourism. In this a way, the government was laying the groundwork for a society that primarily relied on tourism, with agriculture destined to support the needs of this sector (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 441). It is also possible to trace the start of land /property speculation in the 1960s to SETCO's urbanization plan. As a consequence of increased tourism, speculation exploded. At this point, Corsican landowners agreed to sell their land for a pittance. The littoral land was traditionally considered worthless, with elderly landowners often clueless of the land's economic worth (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 443). Furthermore, expansive tourist facilities were generally established in a vacuum, without leading to employment offers for the Corsicans, nor an increased demand for local products (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 444). In sum, Corsicans initially were not reaping the potentially positive impacts this economic sector could have had.

Moreover, with the end of the Algerian-French war in 1963, Corsica experienced the homecoming of French Algerians, the so-called "*Pied-Noirs*" (Black feet). After their return, the repatriates constituted as much as 10 % of the population. These people were granted land in the eastern plain of Corsica by SOMIVAC. In fact, 57.5 % of the soil distributed by SOMIVAC in this period was given to the returnees, in contrast to the 22 % given to Corsicans (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 441). It is thus the repatriates who enjoyed the positive consequences of SOMIVAC's development efforts on the plains. Michelle from the Agricultural Chamber explained the incident in the following manner: "There are two ways to tell the story, some say they came and stole our land, but this is not entirely correct. They came and exploited soil that we had not yet managed to exploit ourselves. Several Corsicans

threatened them and took their vineries.” Many Corsicans were thus reacting negatively to these developments and they did so along national lines.

Nationalism



Figure 6: Graffiti of the "maure's head" with the writings "our territory" in Corsican. Photo taken in Ajaccio by the author

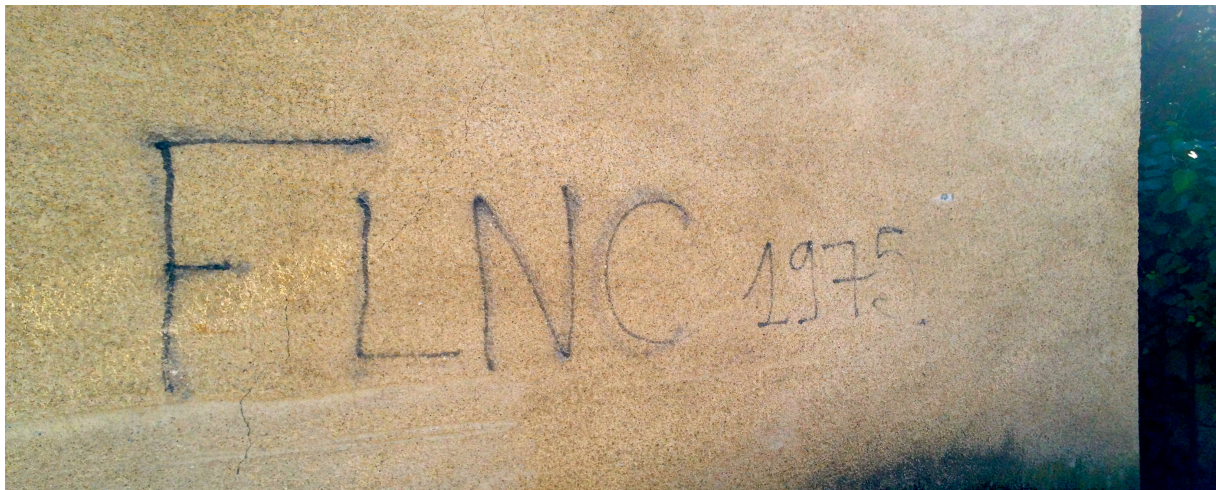


Figure 7: A common sight in Corsica: Graffiti of "FLNC", the nationalist movement. Photo taken in Corte by the author

While walking the streets of cities like Bastia, Ajaccio and Corté, graffiti of nationalist sentiments were a common sight. Writings in Corsican like "paese nostru" (our soil) next to the Corsican symbol of the "maure's head", as well as "FLNC 1975" could be seen almost

everywhere. Moreover, graffiti portraying the link between agriculture and identity were also frequent, such as “*tutti prudutti di u nostru paese*” (“All the products from our land”, in Corsican). Although I was told that the nationalist movement is long gone, their presence was still ubiquitous through these writings on the wall. In addition to their visual presence, the nationalist movement was often mentioned in conversations about tourism. In this section, I wish to emphasize aspects of the Corsican nationalist movement that relate to their efforts to protect agriculture by hindering the expansion of tourism.

First of all, the movement may be seen as a reaction to feeling excluded from the French government’s development plans. Mass tourism truly flourished in Corsica in the 1970s. The government was active in inciting this expansion by proposing a new development plan in 1971. The objective in the domain of tourism was to increase the number of visitors from 500 000 to 2,2 millions by 1985. In order to achieve this goal, more apartments and hotels had to be constructed, which took place mostly on the coast (Constantly 2012, 28). As a reaction, on the 11th of November 1971, the regionalist movement “l’Action Régionaliste Corse” (ARC) stated that the government excluded Corsica from its economic growth, and argued that “this is not a development plan, but a relocation plan of the Corsican people” (Constantly 2012, 29, my translation). ARC denounced this “tourist invasion”, as this kind of development plan “will lead to an exclusion of the Corsicans from the economy and their island. We will lose our identity and the ownership of our soil” (Constantly 2012, 29). Indeed, to this day, the discourses about tourism echo such discourses of an invasion that ruins the island’s economy. Pierre’s girlfriend, Cécile, for instance, complained to me, “it is as tough they have invaded us. They don’t care about culture (*Ils s’en foutent de la culture*). They stay here (*ils restent sur place*) and consume everything. They don’t understand that Corsica is a place outside of France.”

Second of all, the nationalist movement is strongly associated with the protection of Corsican agriculture and land. ARC’s occupation of a wine cellar run by a pied-noir in Aléria in 1975 is today regarded as the founding act of nationalism in Corsica (Constantly 2012, 33). As Michel Codaccioni argues: “Nationalism is born at this moment, as a consequence of a lack of listening to the appeal for development” (in Andreani 2010, 148, my translation). The nationalist movement of the FLNC with the goal in mind to protect Corsican land and agriculture targeted tourist related projects and various private properties, especially illegal constructions along the coast (Andreani 2010, 154), through a series of actions called “*nuits bleues*” (blue nights). This expression designates a series of explosions that took place over a short time period. The name references the color of the sky, as it would turn blue as a

consequence of the explosions. The attacks were indeed numerous; 294 attacks in 1976, 269 in 1977 and 428 in 1978 (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 458).

When my own informants were discussing this period, one positive effect in their view was that tourism and tourist related projects were temporarily put on hold. An effect of these bombings was indeed the decrease in the speculation on the littoral, which brought an immediate halt to the projects that started in the 1960s (Constantly 2012, 33). Thus, the political climate in the 1980s and 1990s led to a decrease in tourism-related activities. Although these symbolic actions were condemned in mainland France, the Corsican people viewed FLNC as a sort of “Zorro” (Andreani 2010, 155), with the nationalist activists portraying themselves as defenders of the environment and culture. For many, the fight for the environment justified such violent actions, as the environmentalist Vincente Cucchi explains: “We don’t want Corsica to resemble the Costa Brava, or places in Italy or Greece. We want to stay as natural as possible. You have to admit that nationalist movements like the FLNC have played a role in protecting the seaside and the coast. For quite a few years, it has put people off. People would not buy land... Violence is part of life, it’s part of Corsican life... We have to recognize that violence has had a positive effect on the environment” (Press TV 2013). Indeed, “Ecological nationalisms” often evoke “visions of deep national links to nature, place, and territory” (Heatherington 2010, 45, Cederlöf and Sivaramakrishnan 2006) where we may see “place-based collective identities played out in the entanglement of nature devotion” (Heatherington 2010, 142, Cederlöf and Sivaramakrishnan 2006, 3).

“Murder Island”

I would frequently hear people refer to the “mafia” as an omnipresent force in Corsican society. It was difficult for me to understand this enigmatic organization. Some people would talk about the mafia as a “matter of fact”, while others would deny its existence entirely. Elliot, for example, summarized the situation to me one day over lunch at the Garden:

Before there was nationalism in Corsica. They would blow up French buildings and vacation houses to keep them away. Now, there is no more nationalism, the bombing is over. All the terrorists are in jail. Now, there is only the mafia and money

speculation left. Now, someone already owns everything, the question now is to construct.

Pierre, on the other hand, did not acknowledge the existence of the mafia: “I still have the keys for my tractor, there is no more violence in Corsica than on the Continent. There is no mafia here, that is exaggerated”. I was thus left puzzled trying to grasp the meaning and influence of this organization on social relations in Corsica¹⁴. What I did come to understand, however, is that these days, Corsica is home to a local elite that is incorporated into the political life of Corsica, whose primary motive is the control of local territory and its commerce, with violence at times used to obtain these goals. This is not unique for Corsica, of course. Indeed, the increase in privatization and commodification of communal land that has accelerated over the last few decades of globalization is a hotly debated phenomenon (see Li 2014, Harvey 2003, Levien 2012).

In the 2000s, the development of tourism and the speculation developed simultaneously with the establishment and formation of this local elite on the island (Poggioli 2013, 59). In each region, murderous rivalries between two or several groups exist that revolve around the control of local criminal activities. In the documentary “Murder Island”, crime reporter Paul Atolli argues: “they all want a piece of the cake” (*ils se disputent le gâteau*) (ABC 2013). Journalist Gilles Millet explained the sobering reality in the same documentary: “The society is soaked in death. You call someone to do something and they say I can’t. I have a funeral to go to. Death is a part of life here”. In 2012, the rate of murders per capita had become one of the highest in Europe (Poggioli 2013, 61). These high death rates have to be linked to rampant property speculation. As Dominique Bucchini, president of the Corsican assembly, argues in the documentary “Corsica: Lawlessness in heart of Europe”: “The violence today comes from the shameless real estate speculation and money laundering conducted of the Corsican mafia” (Press TV 2013). Moreover, it has been argued that property speculation has given these groups an opportunity for reinvesting (i.e. laundering) “dirty money” as the property market is an ideal mechanism for money laundering. Paul Atolli, explains in the documentary: “the money is invested in property and it becomes entirely legal. You can’t trace it back anywhere. The money becomes legal and a part of Corsica’s mainstream economy”.

¹⁴ And I am not alone; in his work from the 1960s, Henner Hess argues that the mafia as an organization is more like a myth (Schneider 2002, 145, Hess 1973). Considering the complexity of the matter, I leave discussions of the mafia to the side (see also Hess 1973, Poggioli 2013, Schneider 2002, Arlacchi 1986)

Recently, there has also been an emergence of so-called “neo-clanism”. Poggioli describes these new groups as being comprised of rich, influential members of local families. They are speculative and ambitious, come from diverse political horizons, and are often represented in public institutions (Poggioli 2013, 72). He adds that these groups have contributed to support organized crime of Corsica’s society through their desire to construct and invest in the economy. A consequence of the collaboration between rich clan members and criminals has been that a lot of criminal activities operate within the “legal” economic-political system (Poggioli 2013, 63-64). This collusion of state actors and organized crime in Corsica (Poggioli 2013, 78) has resulted in the proliferation of financial groups that are also backed by local banks. These actors are consequently seizing, little by little, the quasi-totality of the coast, waiting for the commencement of speculative real-estate projects. This entanglement of economic life, political life and criminal activity has resulted in great pressures to construct on the coast in Corsica (Poggioli 2013, 70). As Elliot argues, the land has usually already been distributed and the fight revolves around getting permits for construction now. It is thus the land’s inherent potential that is the source of friction among different groups in Corsica.

Property: “The blue gold”

The crisis in Corsica is about money, money, money.

Dominique Bucchini



Figure 8: Algajola beach hotel in Ile Rousse¹⁵

The development of the coastal areas since the Second World War may be called “littoralization”, which we may further define as “the concentration of people and activities in the coastal fringes” (Tafari, Pieri, and Maupertuis 2014, 112). This development of new littorals is widespread throughout France, and may be attributed to several factors, such as urbanization and tourism (Tafari, Pieri, and Maupertuis 2014, 115). In response to these developments, the littoral law was enacted in 1986. Pierre explained to me that his family owns an old restaurant in Ajaccio near the beach. “It is from the 1940s, so it can be located next to the beach. The law forbids construction along the coast. Before, this was not a

¹⁵ Extracted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algajola#/media/File:Algajola-Hotel_Plage.jpg the 31st of March 2015

problem since there was no tourism in Corsica. This increase in tourism has led to strong regulations". The goal of the littoral law is to "protect remarkable natural spaces, sites, and landscapes from construction (tourist-related developments in particular) that could affect preservation and conservation" (Breton 2014, 150, my translation).

Another consequence of developments of littoralization in France has been the creation of the "littoral Conservative" (*Le Conservatoire du littoral*) in 1975. This government-run establishment, with the aim of protecting littoral spaces, has become the largest owner of land in Corsica, with 21 % of the coastline (Constantly 2012, 112). Considering the great pressure exerted on land, how did this happen? A German professor at Corte told me a story about the conservation area, "le désert des Agriates", north of Corsica: "In the 70s there was a man who owned land here and who wanted to build big hotel complexes. But you know how Corsicans are when French and German tourists arrive? Boom! They blow it up! So he sold the land to the Conservatoire instead". Thus, the protectionist activities led by the nationalists' activities have largely contributed to increased public ownership. In fact, Corsica has until now avoided the wave of urbanization typical of other coastlines in the Mediterranean since the 1970s. Indeed, Corsica is surrounded by approximately 1000 kilometers of coastline, with 40 % of the coast still protected from urbanization. Moreover, only 10-15 % of the remaining 60 % is actually urbanized (Constantly 2012, 113). These are positive figures compared with the French coastline where only 30 % has escaped urbanization (Constantly 2012, 19). Based on these numbers, we can see how the nationalist campaigns have safeguarded the landscape that the organic farmers today are fighting to cultivate.

Hélène Constantly argues that the littoral law has contributed to creating economic development as well as environmental protection (Constantly 2012, 111). However, the law is still a source of conflict between critics who deem it too restrictive and a hindrance to economic development and environmentalists who claim that it favors urbanization and development (Breton 2014, 145). The law has especially been criticized from the political right, who argues that the law is condemning Corsica to "be beautiful and shut up" (Constantly 2012, 114, my translation). On the other hand, the law does not prohibit construction, but rather promotes the idea that "the closer to the sea, the less construction" (Constantly 2012, 111, my translation). The fact that construction is not entirely outlawed upsets many environmentalists, farmers as well as members of the general public, as they prefer the coast be left untouched and view urbanization as a threat to the environment and the beauty of their home land. We will see that my informants represent the latter as they

explain how coastal urbanization directly threatens their farming practices. The littoral law is thus a failed attempt to appease both of these groups, and therefore a classic example of what Bateson has called the “double bind” where “no matter what a person does, he ‘can’t win’” (Bateson 2000, 201). In a bid to simultaneously develop and preserve the coast, the French state is struggling to juggle two opposing movements: economic development and ecological preservation. Considering this “no-win” situation, it is perhaps not surprising that it leaves everyone dissatisfied.

This double bind becomes particularly evident in the role of the local mayors, as they have the political power to implement a development plan and authorize construction (Constantly 2012, 113). In practice, they are often faced with the dilemma between ecological values of preservation and economic values. We see that the littoral law alone does not guarantee protection (Constantly 2012, 113), as the mayors still have the power to “transform the *maquis*¹⁶ to gold” (Constantly 2012, 16, my translation). Furthermore, Paul Silvani poignantly argues that, with the beaches, sun, and a Mediterranean climate, Corsica hides a “blue gold”¹⁷ that is still unexploited (Andreani 2010, 207). The mayors must therefore decide whether to extract this “blue gold”, or to listen to the arguments of the environmentalists. We will see in chapter six how the mayors are under much pressure to exercise their power regarding construction.

Organic Corsica: The search for utopia

I’m a utopist, but there are several versions of utopia. I look for solutions that are feasible. People say utopia is like a dream. But it is our situation today that is a dream, it cannot last.

Gilles

“What is good about Corsica is that you can live “outside of time” (*après le temps*), away from the world of consumption,” Thomas explained to me. In this section, I argue that the island of Corsica has an “organic” identity since it has virtually no industry, but plenty of virgin lands. Consequently, Corsica is home to land with “potential”. It is this quality that makes Corsica attractive to both organic farmers and tourists. Corsica is, in effect, known for

¹⁶ The French word for the Corsican forests that dominate the landscapes, roughly translated as bushes

¹⁷ “Blue gold” references the French word for urbanization, namely “*béton*” (concrete)

being a tourist destination that offers preserved nature, with its attractiveness mostly based on the presence of the sea, the sun and a “savage” nature. Corsica thus portrays the image of an island that conserves authenticity (Tafari, Pieri, and Maupertuis 2014, 123). Based on this image, organic farmers and the tourist industry seek to realize different forms of utopia through the usage of land in Corsica.

It might seem somewhat counterintuitive for Corsica to have an organic identity considering the enormous pressure on land these days. However, as explained previously, most of the land still remains untouched, and the real struggle is fought over construction. Moreover, while the island’s rocky terrain is maladapted for industrial agriculture, it is well suited for organic agriculture. Indeed, as Thomas adds “you can’t do industrial farming here in Corsica. You can’t drive around with tractors. On the Continent they have large fields. You can’t have that here.” The organic organization in Corsica, CIVAM, seconds his arguments on its website: “Corsica is a privileged territory for organic farming practices. The island is in fact devoid of industry and has had little exposure to environmental pollution” (CIVAM BIO Corse 2015, my translation).

Moreover, although traditional agriculture has declined in Corsica, organic agriculture has steadily grown in recent years. Indeed, between 2005 and 2012, organic surfaces have multiplied 28 times. This has resulted in 9400 cultivated hectares spread over 282 farms (CIVAM BIO Corse 2015). The “organic identity” of Corsica may in part explain the strong development of organic agriculture. Therefore, although I have also talked to several farmers who do not engage in organic practices, I will still maintain that the “agricultural mentality” in Corsica is organic, considering that the landscape is highly unsuitable for industrial agriculture.

However, today’s mass tourism is threatening this organic identity with its large building projects. As Cécile remarked with sadness, “maybe Corsica will be completely different in 20 years. Everything will look the same as everywhere else. They might as well go to Spain or somewhere else. What makes Corsica special is its ‘savage nature’.” Therefore, promoters of an “alternative tourism” argue that Corsica must take advantage of this unique quality, namely its “savage” nature and lack of industry. These same stakeholders envision such tourism endeavors based on an “identity economy” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009) that draw upon an environment of quality and strong traditions (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 496). Defenders of the “identity economy” approach argue that “thirty years behind” may be transformed into “thirty years of advancement” (Andreani 2010, 203). According to this perspective, Corsica, with its untouched landscape and ingrained traditions, has seen the

“train of industrialization” go by, but may become a figure of modernization by showing off its ecological colors to the world (Andreani 2010, 203-204). Jacques-Henri Balbi from the University of Corté argues that Corsica could be a symbolic place for this new form of economy. “It’s about increasing our capital of environmental identity,” he says (Arrighi and Jehasse 2008, 494). Ironically, as the organic community tries to take advantage of suitable growing conditions, the tourist industry aims to capitalize on Corsica’s “organic identity” to attract tourists.

While some authors argue that Corsica remains influenced by a “preindustrial mentality” (Andreani 2010, 191), I contend that Corsica is also the perfect place for those ascribing to a “post-industrial” mentality where organic farmers may come to fulfill their dreams of utopia. Tracey Heatherington argues in a similar manner that “post-industrial values” are now attached to conceptions of nature (Heatherington 2010, 145). In fact, she argues that “environmental nostalgia is the doppelganger of Western industrial progress” (Heatherington 2010, 156). Therefore, Corsica as a non-industrialized place represents a terrain sought out for fulfilling one’s global organic aspirations, but also for tourists to “gaze” upon nature and distance themselves from their urban homes. Thus, I contend that the local preindustrial mentality coupled with strong development efforts create a particular social milieu that attracts actors within the organic movement. We see that both the tourists and farmers come to the island with similar motives in mind, i.e. they are all in search of a utopia. However, the utopia of tourists and the utopia of the farmers are in practice quite different, the latter being a political project that aims to improve the world. The utopia promoted to tourists, on the other hand, does not aim to fundamentally change things, but rather to allow its participants to enter into a dream about an already existing utopia situated in Corsica (Ollandini 2010, 17). It is perhaps these differences in objectives that are the source of the conflicts that we see in Corsica today.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the history of Corsica, with a special focus on developments in tourism and agriculture. Following Hardt (1999), I contend that Corsica has skipped the path of “economic modernization” and transitioned almost directly from a society based on agriculture to a tourist based economy dominated by a “post-industrial economy” or an “informational economy” (91). In order to accurately trace these developments, I have

included a discussion of the nationalist movement to show that identity movements have traditionally been linked to land affiliation and the protection of agriculture, while a local elite who currently promotes tourism developments represents a threat to this particular economic domain. The national movement adopted an ecological identity in its fight against tourism, thereby equating Corsican identity with ecology. In sum, we see two opposing developments in Corsica represented by these groups, namely tourism and agriculture. Although agriculture has declined, we have seen during recent decades an increase in organic agriculture. This chapter concludes by arguing that both tourists and farmers are drawn to Corsica looking for utopia; however, the type of utopia these different groups of people hope to find are quite different.

Chapter 3: Values

Why do the organic farmers I met in Corsica choose organic farming? I will try to give an answer to this question in this chapter. In order to do so, I suggest we need to scrutinize a bigger value system in which they take part. In this chapter I wish to show how the practice and lifestyle of local organic farming may be seen as a commentary on and a protest against industrial farming, and the values it represents. I call the farmers' values ecological; this represents the totality of the farmers' value system. I will argue that we may divide the ecological values into two key values; organic and locality. Organic values are only concerned with those values regarding organic farming practices, and we may define these as practices concerned with the management of waste. Locality refers to practices concerned with the local scale of consumption and exchange. Finally, I will argue that we may expand upon the concept of locality to include the political principle of "communism" in Marcel Mauss' sense of the word. Relying on these practices and values, I argue that the way of life the organic farmers engage in may be seen as an attempt to live outside of the capitalist system.

What do I mean by "values" exactly? First of all, we may distinguish between "values" in the sociological meaning the word; namely what is ultimately good, proper, or desirable in human life. Second of all, we may understand "value" in the economic sense, that is, the degree to which objects are desired (Graeber 2001, 2). Although these two concepts are to some extent interlinked, when I am referring to "values" I refer to them as what is considered as the "good life" or rather the desirable lifestyle. In order to understand these notions of the good life, I will utilize Louis Dumont (1982) and David Graeber (2001) and their perspectives on values. I will utilize Dumont in order to show that the ecological values of the farmers may be seen as part of a binary oppositional structure. Ecological have to be compared with economic values, i.e. industrial, tourist or capitalist practices, in order to be valuable for the farmers. To better understand the farmers' motivation, I will lean upon David Graeber who argues that society may be seen as an active project or a set of projects and that value is the way through which actions become meaningful to the actors, as their actions is situated in a social whole, which may be real or imaginary (2001, 254). With this in mind, I will analyze how macro processes may be seen in relation to how my informants interact with and react against global processes of capitalism, on a day-to-day basis. In order

to do so it is important to have in mind that a value analysis comprises the components of comparison and imagination.

An “imagined community” may be defined as a group of people, “not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of imagination” (Kanno and Norton 2003, 241, see also Anderson 1991). Imagination is thus an important source of community and the term may be defined as “a process of expanding oneself by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves” (Wenger 1998, 176). In order for the organic movement to be meaningful and valuable for the social actors involved, its actors need the capacity of imagination in order to conjure up ideas of industrial practices with which they may compare themselves. In contrast to the “imagined community” (Anderson 1991) of the nationalist movement, we will see that the horizon of the organic farmers is rather the global. Thus, this imagined society is in many respects a global society that exceeds the geographical location of Corsica, since industrial farming and capitalism are activities that reach worldwide. Considering that industrialism never reached Corsica, the actors and structures the farmers oppose is in particular “imagined” as they never interact with them on a day to-day basis. There is thus a discourse production occurring that opposes their practices with those “imaginary” practices of industrial production. Organic farming in Corsica may therefore be seen as a “project of scale-making” as the farmers are reproducing “ideologies of scale” (Tsing 2000) about organic agriculture in opposition to capitalism.

Organic Values



Figure 9: Animals are very important for the functioning of the farm and for having a circular process between production of products and waste. Here we are feeding the hens food scraps. Photo taken by author.

People call what she does organic agriculture, they call her tomatoes organic tomatoes. And the new type of tomatoes, they call them tomatoes. Our forefathers, this is what they did, this was all they knew. I call Julie's tomatoes, tomatoes, and the new tomatoes I call petroleum tomatoes (tomates de pétrole)

Gilles

This quote is taken from a conversation I had with one of Christine's friends, Gilles, who was a tour guide in Corsica. He arranged trips to hike the famous G20, a trail that crosses Corsica, which attracts many tourists. He had strong opinions concerning agriculture

and tourism. After learning about my thesis we sat for a long time talking about these topics. He showed a strong disdain for everything concerning tourism, industrial farming and capitalism. By contrasting “petrol tomatoes” with “normal tomatoes”, Gilles emphasized how organic farming can only make sense when we contrast it to industrial agriculture. This section will show how organic values are closely intertwined and opposed to industrial values in the particular domain of waste.

During my stay at the farms, I noticed a set of practices regarding waste that could be seen to be in direct opposition with how industrial farming systems function. As pointed out in chapter one, pollution and waste are major problems in industrial agriculture. In contrast, at the farms where I stayed, it was rare that anything was ever wasted. Especially regarding leftover food: I would in fact never witness food going to waste during my stay in Corsica. Everything had a meaning, a place within a bigger organic system. Pierre would correct me in a serious tone if I failed to compost correctly, saying that at farms, everything can be used for something. He was not alone; most of the farmers would react strongly if a practice was seen as wasteful. In their view, there is no such thing as waste. In contrast to industrial production, leftovers were simply given to animals. In fact, Fabien from the Green Association emphasized that a farm without animals is not really a farm, since it would not be possible to have this function. Waste from animals, and all other organic matter will decompose and turn into fertile soil used for the plants. This is thus a perfect circular system. Fabien called farms “a closed system”.

Every morning at Pierre’s, I went to the hen house to feed the poultry. After giving them corn and water, as well as leftovers from the kitchen, I fetched the eggs. Usually there were five to six eggs. I had to bring the eggs back to the kitchen and organize them with the others. It was very important to put the new eggs under the old ones, in this way, we would always eat the oldest eggs first ensuring that we never had anything to throw out. After eating the eggs we would save the eggshells. We put them in a container together with other food scraps. Indeed, all leftover foods would be placed here and given to the hens. Pierre would show me how to crush the eggshells with a stone. We would then feed the eggshells together with the food scraps to the chickens. Pierre explained how the eggshells are made of sand, and that it is important for the hens to get this sand in their diet. We needed to crush them though; if the hens knew they were eating their own eggshells, they would pick on future eggs. The next day I would again pick up new eggs that we would eat. In this way, I witnessed a circular system with a synergy between the production and consumption of food.

In contrast to Pierre, Christine could not dispose of all leftovers through her hens as she had fewer than him. However, the organic leftovers could be utilized as compost instead. In Christine's shack there were several boxes with grapefruits. One day she asked me to sort them. The rotten ones could be put in the compost. I sorted the grape fruits, and the good ones would be resold on the market later on. She had received the grapefruits from another farmer; he could not sell these grapefruits to the supermarket because their standard was not good enough. Christine laughed; "look at them", she said, "they're totally fine". I agreed, there was nothing wrong with the grapefruits; I would have bought them in the supermarket without hesitation. This showed how the definition of waste in industrial production is much more narrow than at organic farms. Indeed, "enormous quantities of food go to waste because they do not meet the very narrow specifications now demanded by most big supermarkets" (Sage 2012, 201). At organic farms, however, the norm was to avoid throwing food away. Christine explained to me later that when deciding whether to keep a vegetable, she asked herself "Could I eat this?" And even when the answer to that question was no, the food would not be wasted. It would be given to the chickens, or put in the compost. In the compost, the rotten food would naturally decompose, turning into fertile soil, which would be used to plant new vegetables in the future.

In addition to leftover foods, we would empty the faeces of the chickens once a week in addition to our own, and place it in the large compost pile. Christine had an outside lavatory that we had to empty every day. She had made space for these residues behind the chicken coop. Because of this, both the farmers and the animals had to consume organic products, as our own waste would return to the soil. When I emptied the lavatory there, I had to turn away because of the intense smell. However, it was not waste. It was organic material that one day would turn into fertile soil where new life could emerge. "One day, I will plant some beautiful fruit trees over there," Christine would say. It struck me that I too was a part of this organic system.

The systemic characteristics of the organic farms are somewhat similar to the ideas of Gregory Bateson (2000) and his discussion of ecosystems, which are "the natural biological surroundings" (436) of humans. These systems, wholes, or "community of creatures" constitute parts that are dependent on each other and live in synergy. Bateson argues that knowledge of these types of systems demands *wisdom*, a quality lacking in scientific traditions such as medicine. In "Steps to an ecology of mind", he continues by using research in medicine as an example. Researchers usually start out by locating a problem for which they seek to find a solution, for example polio or cancer. Once a solution has been found, the

researcher will continue looking for solutions in other problem areas without investing time on the underlying system. The researchers thus lacks wisdom, which may be defined as “the knowledge of the larger interactive system- that system which, if disturbed, is likely to generate exponential curves of change” (Bateson 2000, 439). The problem, according to Bateson, is how the human consciousness sets a *purpose* for what should be inspected. This mind-set creates technical solutions to problems, rather than scrutinizing the underlying systemic disturbances. An eco-system on the other hand, inhabits no such consciousness and maintains a natural balance over time.

Bateson’s theory is similar to the philosophy of Howard, the founder of organic agriculture. Howard did not coin the name organic, but rather called the practice “Nature’s farming”. Howard described the philosophy in the following manner: “Mother earth never attempts to farm without livestock: she always raises mixed crops; great pains are taken to preserve the soil and prevent erosion; the mixed vegetable and animal wastes are converted into humus; there is no waste; the processes of growth and the processes of decay balance one another” (Heckman 2006, 146). Therefore, in a similar manner as Bateson, Howard favored the study of whole systems over reductionism (Heckman 2006, 145) and presented a view where the farm is viewed as a symbiotic unit (Heckman 2006, 146).

Bateson argues that a balanced natural system is ceasing to exist as a consequence of human intervention. The *purpose* of industrial agriculture has been to solve the problems of efficiency and profit. As a consequence, these technical solutions have disrupted natural ecosystems that were in balance. Michael Pollan (2006) illustrates how industrial agriculture disturbs these eco-systems by arguing that “when animals live on farms the very idea of waste ceases to exist; what you have instead is a closed ecological loop- what in retrospect you might call a solution.” He argues further that with the industrialization of meat, this “elegant solution” has been divided “into two new problems: a fertility problem on the farm (which must be remedied with chemical fertilizers) and a pollution problem on the feedlot (which seldom is remedied at all)¹⁸.” The separation of the production of meat and vegetables has thus created a pollution and waste problem. Industrial agriculture is thus disturbing what Bateson calls balanced natural systems. Human intervention does not make these systems less natural, only unbalanced. The root of the problem may be traced back to “conscious purpose” in humans which he argues, “upset the balances of the body, of society, and of the biological world around us. A pathology- a loss of balance- is threatened” (Bateson 2000, 440).

¹⁸ Chapter 4 page 67 in Kindle version

I argue that the organic farmers are trying to do the exact opposite. They try to live according to the logic of nature, rather than the logic of technical problem solving. By seeing themselves as a small part within a bigger picture, the farmers are trying to adopt an approach similar to that of Bateson's notion of wisdom. They, too, adopt what Bateson calls "conscious purpose" by intentionally choosing to discard an "unholistic" approach, thus they see the problem as a lack of focus on the system's connectedness. In Bateson own words, they are trying to avoid pulling out "from the total mind, sequences which do not have the loop structure which is characteristic of the whole systemic structure" (Bateson 2000, 440).

An anthropological account of "Values"

So far we have witnessed waste practices among the organic farmers. By comparing the organic practices of the farmers with industrial agriculture, we see that their practices are in direct opposition in regards to waste. The ideas of organic versus industrial agriculture thus constitutes a binary opposition of ideas in the structuralist sense. The structuralist position argues that in order to understand the meaning of a given object, one must understand its place in a larger system (Graeber 2001, 14). Thus, as the citation of Gilles I started with clearly emphasizes, to understand what organic farming is entails an understanding of what it is not, namely industrial agriculture.

To further understand this structuralist opposition between organic and industrial, the value theory of Louis Dumont (1982) serves as a useful vantage point. Dumont argues that Structuralists fail to realize that binary ideas are also "values" (Dumont 1982, Graeber 2001, 16). That is, the action of putting two ideas in opposition will implicitly entail a normative observation of these concepts. He argues that, "values are in general intimately combined with other, non-normative representations. A 'system of values' is thus an abstraction from a wider system of ideas-and-values" (Dumont 1982, 220). What is, and what ought to be, are not clear-cut and may on occasion appear to be the same thing. When discussing organic and industrial agriculture, they may appear to be just two neutral concepts, but Dumont argues that normative beliefs will always follow such a distinction. Moreover, the normative beliefs arising out of these conceptual distinctions will always be ranked; the "high ideas" or superior values will both contradict and include "low ideas". He calls this relation "encompassment" (1982, 224-225). Values are therefore always hierarchical in Dumont's

sense. The superior value is thus seen as more universal and will be ranked higher. Together, they will comprise a whole. Hence, the idea of industrial farming is crucial in order to give value to organic farming. Without it, organic farmers would have nothing with which to compare themselves, making organic farming a neutral activity. The practice of not producing waste would be seen as natural (as it indeed once was) and would not be contrasted with the waste producing industry that is industrial agriculture. And a circular approach à la Bateson that views everything as connected will be viewed as a better way of living life than to focus on technical solutions that disturb the system in the long run. Thus, in this case, organic values represent a circular system where everything is connected, while industrial values represent technical solutions to the production of food. In Dumont's understanding, then, the circular system (i.e. the organic values), encompass technical "fixes" that also has a place in the larger circular system. In the choice between the two my informants consider the organic values as superior and more universal.

However, Dumont's structural view of values still does not explain the reason why the farmers have made the decision to do farming. We may take the easy way and conclude that organic farming is environmentally sustainable and that this fact in itself may explain their motivation for wanting to pursue these practices. However, if this indeed were enough, we would expect industrial agriculture to disappear at any moment. David Graeber argues that, "the great dilemma of Structuralism has been how to move on from understanding people's passive contemplation of the world, to their active participation in it" (Graeber 2001, 16). Applied to my own case, this would mean that even though actors view industrial and organic as opposite forces, with organic possibly seen as better, it does not explain the reason why the organic farmers actively choose to live out their values. Thus, an approach to analyze value-systems must solve the problem of how to link social structure with individual desire.

Graeber solved this dilemma by leaning on Terence Turner's ideas of tokens of value (Graeber 2001, 76). These "tokens" may be any phenomenon in a given society that is valued. Turner argues that these tokens are not only media of value, but also an embodiment of value, and may even be seen as the *origins of those values*. In an equal manner, Michael Lambek (2013, 147) argues that acts, as well as objects, generate value and that "performative acts are valuable simply, in, of, and for themselves" (2013, 148). Performative acts are the power to impose recognition, and value is manifested through this act (Lambek 2013, 145). Therefore, the *act* of doing organic farming (as well as the organic food) may be seen as a physical representation of the organic farmers' values. This raises the question: what motivates action? Graeber stresses, in analyzing the works of Karl Marx, that it is the

human capacity of imagination that is essential to motivate action as “humans produce things in a self-conscious manner” (Graeber 2001, 58). To understand the importance of imagination here I suggest we must take into consideration what I see at the overall motive of organic farming; namely to produce a society that is environmentally sustainable. By “performing” acts of waste management practices the farmers are implicitly saying something about how they wish to see the consumption and production habits of other members of society. However, “society” is not an easily tangible object, but can only be grasped through the power of imagination. Indeed, Graeber defines society as a process of activities or projects in which all the pursuits for values are coordinated, but it also consists of a “potential audience” where the opinions of others “matters in some way” (2001, 76). Value may then be defined as the way through which actions become meaningful to the actors, as it is situated in a social whole, which may be real or imaginary (2001, 254). Thus, by imagining other actors’ pursuit of values, in particular within industrial agriculture, the organic farmers are motivated to pursue their own ecological values. Put differently, unlike the nationalists of the 1970s, the farmers locate their actions in an “imagined” global world, where their actions are seen as valuable in a world where industrial agriculture is seen as dominant.

Locality; going outside the supermarket

On ne peut pas tout faire (you cannot do everything)

Pierre

Whilst staying with Pierre, I noticed how most of the food we ate was either produced by him, or given to us by a nearby farmer. The wine was from a friend. The cheese, the “brocciu”¹⁹ was delivered by Claude. He lived up in the mountains, and brought with him cheese from the farmers nearby. We also got fish from local fishermen. I took note of this since I was responsible for doing the shopping at the supermarket, and bought all the groceries we could not get from local producers. Sugar, crackers, milk, bread, canned groceries, soups and cereal were bought when needed. Cheese, meat, fruit, olives, wine and vegetables were all produced at the farm or given to us in exchange for other goods. It thus became clear to me that it is important for the farmers to consume locally. Indeed, when

¹⁹ Brocciu is a traditional goat cheese from Corsica. It is produced during winter, but a fake sister is sold to tourists during summer. I stayed with Pierre in February and had the chance to taste this delicious cheese.

presented with Christine's pantry, I saw that it mostly consisted of homemade jelly and self-picked dried tea. Moreover, most of the food we ate were produced at the farm, or exchanged with other farmers. We ate bread that Nadine produced, jelly from Christine's garden, fruits from the garden, egg plants, squash, onions, garlic, leek, strawberries, salad, tomatoes, paprika, cucumber and pumpkin. We ate according to season, so for a period we had squash and pasta for dinner everyday. Christine used to joke about our meals saying that "here, we only serve squash". Christine also produced fermented vegetables that we ate on bread or for dinner.

Thus, in order to achieve the goal of consuming locally, a network of exchange between the organic farmers has developed. I witnessed how Nadine gave bread to Lucille and Lucille gave eggs in return. Christine, on the other hand, gave vegetables in exchange for bread. "It's genius," Christine would say enthusiastically. In such a way, the farmers had most of their needs met, through a peculiar form of division of labor.

Here we will see that locality may be seen as the second key value inherent in the ecological values of the farmers. By locality I mean that the farmers would try to both consume and sell their products in close proximity. This became apparent through the farmers' avoidance of the supermarket. Indeed, if it was possible for them to obtain a product by exchanging it for another product, this was in fact the preferred way. Due to such practice, my informants would rarely go to the supermarket at all. This also allowed them to avoid industrially produced goods, as the supermarket is where you normally would find these. Instead, most of my informants had an extensive network of other organic farmers with whom they would exchange goods, because, as Pierre often would say "you cannot do everything" (*on peut pas tout faire*). By this he meant that in an ideal world, you would be able to produce everything you needed in order to live, but since this is not possible, local exchange is a good alternative. I see this performative act as a protest not only against the immense scale of industrial agriculture, but also the large markets of capitalism. Therefore, here I would like to argue that industrial agriculture should be situated within that bigger imaginary frame of capitalism. The organic farmers' values are, in a way, oppositional to those of capitalism, especially in regard to local consumption and production.

This local network of exchange brings to mind Graeber's analysis of the political project of Marcel Mauss. According to Graeber, what is less known is how Mauss was a radical leftist. In contrast to Karl Marx, Mauss was not trying to describe and criticize how the logic of the marketplace had become common sense in most modern societies. He was rather trying to explain "the degree to which it had failed to do so; to explain why so many

people- and particularly, so many of the less powerful and privileged members of society- found its logic morally repugnant” (Graeber 2001, 162). Thus, Mauss was interested in those actors who rejected the logic of capitalism and who did not see it as a natural logic or law to which one must abide. By searching outside of the Western hemisphere, Mauss was looking for a universal moral ground that allowed him to criticize capitalism as well as looking for alternative institutions that might take its place (Graeber 2001, 255). His project was somewhat similar to that of Malinowski who searched for ways to displace the classical model of the “Primitive Economic Man” or, *homo economicus*. He defines *homo economicus* as “an imaginary primitive man or savage, prompted in all his actions by a rationalistic conception of self-interest” (Malinowski 1922, 60). Moreover, this type is only driven by “pure economic motives of enlightened self-interest”. These political projects remind me of my own informants and how they themselves live their lives searching for alternative institutions outside of capitalism. Rather than being politically active and criticizing the system from within, they try to live outside it, embodying this criticism as much in action as in words. This further proves the point that food often is politicized and that the notion of “politics of food” may justifiably be expanded to “fields and arenas not traditionally thought of as ‘political’” (Lien 2004, 2). Thus, although the organic movement in Corsica was not politicized in the narrow sense of the word, I see this as a non-verbalized embodied protest implemented in “performative acts” of “ordinary” human activity (Lambek 2013, 144).

A local mode of exchange was moreover used in the sale of products. The farmers would exchange products and sell these products to tourists or local clients. In this manner, all the farmers were guaranteed a diverse selection of products. Pierre, for instance, told me of his plans to have a “*table de dégustation*” (tasting table) for the tourists in the summer. There, he would present his own products, as well as food from other places in Corsica. He explains that he exchanges food with other farmers in order to do this one day. In addition to his own food, he would present other products such as wine and honey and charcuterie. “Will you have your own pigs?” I asked him, “No! I can’t do everything”. He explained to me how he would get the meat, cheese and all the products that he doesn’t make himself from friends. “It’s not a gift, but almost. It is much cheaper than the supermarket, and I’ll know where it comes from. I don’t get that at the supermarket”. “I don’t want to sell my products through the supermarket, that’s not how I do things”. Network and exchange were thus important means to avoid buying groceries at the supermarket, as well as avoid using the supermarket to promote your products.

The act of avoiding the supermarket was thus considered an important value in itself by my informants, a token of value, or a key performative act. Indeed, the supermarket was made out to be the ultimate evil that was to be avoided if possible. This became especially clear to me one day at Christine's farm. She wanted us to taste a tomato she had grown. It was still weeks away from the tomato season, but she had grown this tomato in the green house, and it was thus not a product of "natural" sunlight and local soil conditions. Tom tasted it and I saw that he was not 100 % pleased. He said, "Well, they're still better than the ones you get at the supermarket. The tomatoes from the supermarket are disgusting (*dégoulas*)."

An extensive network of exchange among the farmers contributed to blurring the lines between exchange among the farmers and exchange with clients. Both of these forms of exchange have in common that they take place outside the supermarket. What separates them is the use of money. All the farmers I stayed with would sell all their commodities to customers at markets or directly at the farms with the use of money as a means of exchange. However, there is not a clear-cut separation between exchange between friends and customers. I witnessed flowing boundaries between exchanges made internally and externally. For example, at the weekly market with Christine and Nadine, Nadine would keep some bread aside for Christine, Tom and some other friends. Her bread was popular, and normally it would be sold out within a few hours. Some customers would spot the bread she had put aside; she would explain that this was reserved for someone else. Hence, market logic of exchange would be mixed with a gift economy. The bread inhabits the status of being both a profit-bearing commodity as well as a medium of personal exchange.

In a capitalist market, money guarantees you the right to buy a commodity, making the social relation with the producer irrelevant. One may even argue that the capitalist system is based on this separation between producer and consumer. This point has famously been discussed by Marx as the source of what he calls the fetishization of products. The value of the product seems to stem from the product itself, rather than from the work invested in it. It is precisely "because of the peculiar, anonymous nature of a market system, that whole history becomes invisible from the consumer's point of view" (Graeber 2001, 65). Since the history of the making of the product is invisible, "it looks as if the value of the object (...) is an aspect of the product itself" (Graeber 2001, 65). The point to make here is that capitalist markets are *impersonal* in a way as the relationship entangled in objects has been reduced to that between a commodity and the consumer. The organic farmers on the other hand represent a system where this relationship is more of a personal kind. Indeed, organic

movements advocate a reconnection between production and consumption, or producers and consumers (Pratt 2007, 287). Mauss himself aimed at describing exchange in societies without the use of money. In today's world this is a more difficult task. The farmers did exchange goods for money, making them to some degree part of a system where money gives you the right to buy a product, but where personal relationships still had priority. What I witnessed was in fact a system where the impersonal character of markets were mixed with the personal character of gift exchange. Thus, the boundaries between exchange of products and selling them can be unclear and negotiable.

The relation between the customers at the market and the farmers are thus of a far more personal character, although money is used as a medium of exchange. In addition to doing a market once a week, Christine would sell a variety of vegetables in large bags once a week to her clients. She decided what to put in the bags, as this would vary according to season. Every Friday, we would pack up to 30 different bags of food that we brought to a local café. There, we would wait all day, and the clients would come by to pick up their order. Christine did not always have enough vegetables, so she depended on Nadine to contribute with her bread, and Dénise and Louis who would supplement with more vegetables. Later on, Christine would divide the profit according to how much they had contributed that week.

The café became a social arena for discussing food. It became apparent to me that there was a personal character to this exchange of groceries. Christine has built up her client base over years by being social and knowing a lot of people. Sociality is thus an advantage in these types of personal markets. Small talk and socializing are valuable in order to make profit on your goods. This personal form of exchange also opens up room for discussions of the product. One day we were sitting at the usual café, and one lady approached Christine. She talked about the bag she got last week; she was not satisfied with the plums. "It was all soft (*mouille*)", she exclaims in a displeased voice. "Ah really?" (*ah bon?*). Christine did not seem upset. She explains that she had tasted the plums herself, and found that the plums were good, even though they were a bit soft. The lady did not agree with her. Although they were having a disagreement about the product, the friendly sociality of the context did not permit a larger argument. Christine got a chance to explain herself, and the lady was heard. It is hard to imagine a similar situation taking place at the supermarket. The proximity between producer and consumer are thus a prerequisite for this type of exchange. Moreover, the boundaries are fluid and flexible, opening up room for negotiations and discussions about food

Local communism

I was often told that everyone knows everyone in Corsica. This seemed to be especially true within the organic farming community. As Tom explained to me one day; “The mentality in Corsica is a bit special, but it is fantastic with all the people you know and the willingness to help (*entraide*). Everyone helps each other. That’s how Christine came to set herself up here, and I myself have had a lot of help from people around me. You always have a free bed for friends, it’s not like that on the continent”. Indeed, when Christine was allotted the land plot she currently cultivates, she got help from people all over Corsica in order to settle down properly. The importance of network exceeded the value of exchanging food and it was also important in order to offer each other help when needed. Nadine explained to me that when the mayor kicked her out of Christine’s²⁰, she received massive support from the community in order to find a new place. It is thanks to the community that I have found this place to stay, she explains. When they found out I needed a place to live they helped me a lot. It’s because everyone knows it is difficult to find land, so everyone is eager to help, she clarifies further. Thanks to her contacts at the local market, Nadine was able to keep going on with her work as a farmer. It was thus very normal to offer help to your acquaintances. Lucille arranged a work group in order to fix the fences when rabbits attacked her harvest. Thanks to their help, she had new fences put up within a few days. Finally, the last day I stayed with Christine, she arranged a “*fête de bio*” (an organic party) where she had a “*porte ouverte*” (open door). It was a massive project and she was very stressed about it. A few days in advance, she sent out an “appeal” to her friends that she needed help. They came over the next day to set up the outside lavatories, help to cook food, install tables and set up the tent for film viewings. It became clear to me that reaching out for help was the norm among the farmers; it helped establish a back-up system of security that meant they could always rely on each other.

The importance of benevolent help became especially apparent to me during an incident when help was required, but when it was not given. Next to one of Christine’s land plots was a sheep field. One day, the electric fence broke, and the sheep jumped over and ate almost all of her harvest. Christine was very upset during this incident. Christine told me that there was a hole in the neighbor’s fence; when she confronted him he said he would fix it, but he followed that statement with “but I don’t owe you anything!” Christine said she would

²⁰ I will return to this incident in chapter six.

never have asked him to repay her, but she was shocked that he did not offer to give some help back. She could not understand why he did not offer help or just a small gesture, "anything". It was apparent to me that the point for her was the willingness to help out, rather than receive compensation for the economic value lost in the harvest. She did not want him to compensate her for the lost profit; she wanted to see a benevolent action through aiding and offering aid.

The system of mutual help as well as the exchange network among the farmers brings me to Graeber's (2001, 159) discussion of what Mauss called "total prestations" (*prestations totale*) in gift societies. Graeber quotes Mauss from lectures given at the Institut d'Ethnologie in 1935 and 1938 where he defines "total prestations" as "open-ended rights that in most societies exist mainly between particular families and particular individuals" (Graeber 2001, 159). This definition allows us to analyze exchange as a phenomenon between individuals, rather than between social groupings. These rights should be regarded as both material and immaterial and may include the physical exchange of food between the farmers, as well as the help given in times of need. According to Graeber, Mauss' attention was on the open-ended nature of obligations, which in turn translated into an alternative definition of communism:

When someone has the right to take what she feels she needs without any direct payment or reciprocation, then this is communism. But this means that it is perfectly possible to have a system of individualistic communism: in which specific individuals are bound together by such open-ended obligations, whether one-sided, or whether both parties have equal rights to call on the other. These would then knit together across the society, creating "a collection of individual positions which constitute a system of total reciprocities" (Mauss quoted in Graeber 2001, 159).

It is thus an error to think of communism and individualism as opposites according to Mauss. Moreover, this "system of total reciprocities" constitutes a network of gift giving in its broadest sense. However, Graeber argues that this is a sort of exchange that is built on reciprocity, but also resembles barter and thus cannot be called a "gift-economy" (Graeber 2001, 225). It is therefore as sort of "balanced reciprocity" that includes "both classical gift exchange and the less cutthroat forms of trade and barter" (Graeber 2001, 219). This definition also resonates with what I witnessed in the personal forms of markets among farmers and their clients. This sort of system would in fact "correspond exactly to what we

call communism, but it will still be a strictly individual thing” (Graeber 2001, 160). Therefore, as a sort of protest to capitalist values, the practice of the farmers embodies what Mauss would term a sort of communism where permanent relationships are created between individuals and groups. These relations are permanent precisely because there is no way to cancel them out by a repayment. This “communism” is thus built on “an image of eternity” (Graeber 2001, 218). In contrast to other studies conforming to this model of communism, the Trobrianders studied by Malinowski for example, the organic farmers in Corsica live in a society where values regarding market exchanges and capitalism dominate. This only goes to show that communism (in Mauss’ terms) may exist “within the very organization of corporate capitalism itself” (Graeber 2001, 227). Moreover, Graeber argues that it is exactly these types of practices that make it possible for people within a society to see the larger structures of capitalism as unjust (Graeber 2001, 227). By practicing a set of values opposite to that of capitalism, they embody a critique of it, even though they ultimately are inextricably positioned within those same structures they are trying to resist.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined certain key areas of the farmers’ ecological values, namely organic values and locality. I started the chapter by asking why organic farmers choose organic farming. I have answered this by defining value as a meaningful action located within an imaginary or real society. By actively comparing their action to its opposite, their actions become meaningful in a global society where the capitalist system has become the norm. By leaning on Mauss’ understanding of communism, I have argued that the organic farmers are resisting the system as a whole by trying to live outside capitalism. However, the organic farmers are ultimately lodged within those same structures they are trying to resist. As we will see throughout the rest of the thesis, this poses a number of problems for the farmers.

Chapter 4: Competitive & Coeval Values

What is organic production? During my fieldwork I felt I never got precise answers to this question. Although I got different explanations and different viewpoints on how to best “do” organic production, a clear definition was never given. In the French law of 4th of July 1980, organic agriculture is simply defined as an “agriculture that does not use synthetically chemical products” (Silguy 1994, 59). However, the obscureness around both the French term “biologique” and the English term “organic” contributes to confusion around its real meaning (Silguy 1994, 59). Moreover, Pratt (2009, 156) argues that the term is constructed in complex and variable ways. First of all, it is shaped by the different aspirations and priorities of the farmers involved. Secondly, it is shaped by the “imagined” industrial agriculture to which it responds. Lastly, it is influenced by the organization of markets in the society it emerges from. It is thus a concept that needs to be examined in the context in which it is being practiced. This is what I aim to do in this chapter.

So far we have seen that organic farmers are people who share a certain value system, through scrutinizing the global scale-making project of producing an imagined idealized world of values. However, hidden behind similar views on waste and locality, there are specters of practices that differ among the organic farmers. Thus, in my search for one consistent “organic value”, I realized after a while that perhaps I was looking for something that did not exist. In my experience, there are as many perspectives on organic farming as there are organic farmers. Therefore, behind this question lies the insight that the values held by the farmers are contradictory and not consistent in practice, and interestingly enough, the consequence of these contradictory ideas about organic farming entailed the moral evaluations of other farmers.

As argued in the previous chapter, for the pursuit of a certain value to be valuable, there must be an audience. Graeber argues that “for most those involved in pursuing a particular form of value, that’s what “society” is: that audience” (2013, 226). Society thus serves as an audience to those actors seeking to pursue their values. Indeed, according to Max Weber (Weber 1978, 205-307, in Graeber 2001, 227-228), there are two forms of value competition. First of all, there is the internal game, “where members of a certain status group are vying over their own notion of esteem”. Secondly, there is “the larger struggle within the

society as a whole to establish that particular notion of esteem, and the style of life with which it is associated, as the highest or most legitimate value”. The latter was dealt with in the previous chapter, while the focus here will be on the former, namely that “internal game” among the farmers. In this chapter, we will thus “scale down” and scrutinize the social life of the organic farmers where the “audience” is none other than they themselves.

In this chapter, then, I seek to present localized processes where “society” only comprises of organic farmers. I aim to show that new value hierarchies are created within the organic community once action is locally situated (or imagined). The values that are used to measure “goodness”, organic or not organic, are then used to measure each other within the community. Are you organic enough? Or are you using measures that may be associated with industrial production? In this way, there is a constant friction between the ecological values and the economic values that the farmers have to juggle.

In this chapter I argue that this value conflict emerges directly out of the farmers positioning in a capitalist system since this is a system where the economic values dominate and encompass the ecological ones. Although the farmers are leading lives that actively reject capitalism and the values it represent, practices affiliated with industrial agriculture and capitalism may also at times be seen as necessary. One example relevant here is the usage of technology and pesticides in farming. It may provide profit and well being for the farmers even though it also represents something negative for them. I see this process of switching between contradictory value regimes as a display of different processes of resistance and incorporation to the capitalist system that Pratt (2009, 161) suggests we must investigate when it comes to alternative farming movements. Practices in line with capitalistic values may thus be seen as a practice of incorporation, while practices in line with organic values may be seen as a process of resistance. The farmers are thus struggling between resisting the capitalist system and being incorporated into its logic. This only goes to show that although the organic movement rejects processes of capitalism, “activities of seemingly autonomous small producers are shaped less by their own decisions than by the sociology, economics, and technology of production and consumption far from the sites where they actually produce” (Kearney 1996, 128).

Coeval values

I noticed whilst staying with different farmers, how different views about organic farming prevailed. There seemed to be a hierarchy at play that concerned the best way to do organic farming. One day during my stay in Bastia, I went to the beach by myself. There, I got to know some people that invited me over to drink beer with them. I found out that one of the guys worked in agriculture. Excited about having this in common with me, he asked me about my plans. I told them that I was going to the Garden next, and in response he grunted and said: “They suck (*ils sont nuls*), they even import their seedlings”. This remark sparked my interest. The Garden had lost credibility in his eyes since they were importing, and not producing their own seedlings. I kept an eye out once at the Garden. I looked at the packages of the bags of soil, fertilizer and the seedlings. I confirmed to myself that the seedlings in fact were imported from Germany.

I continued to investigate this curious fact at the other farms. I felt my relationship with Fabien from the Green Association was a more open one, so I asked him about their practices. He confessed that they actually bought their soil from Holland. “I know of a lady that gets her soil from the *maquis*, we should do something similar. It’s not good”. I sensed a certain guilt when we discussed the topic. In contrast to the Garden, however, the Green Association prides itself in producing and conserving their own seedlings. I mentioned to him that the Garden imports their seedlings. “It’s kind of like cheating when you advertise your food as organic. The best thing is to use your own seedlings from your own soil”.

The practice of importing your seedlings contradicts the values that organic production stands for. When thinking about it, organic production actually stops being “local” once a great deal of transportation is required. It thus becomes a global activity that is environmentally damaging. However, few of my informants mentioned this fact to me, or seemed to be bothered by it at all. Therefore, I did not hear a lot about it besides from the guy I met at the beach that day. Maybe if I had stayed at a farm more consistent and “extreme” in their practices, this would have been a bigger topic. There were, however, other sources of friction regarding the different practices of the farmers.

Originally, I was planning to go to a fifth farm in the south of Corsica at the end of my stay. One day I asked Christine about them. It turned out that she knew them as her old farm used to be located next to theirs. She told me that she went to them for help once since she was quite new and wanted some advice. “They heard that I did plastic mulching

(*paillage*)²¹ and they told me that I didn't do real organic farming. They are very extreme in my opinion". Moreover, she explained how the wife asked the same questions in the "formations"²² about the difference between male and female squash plants twice in a three-year time span. "It is so easy!" she laughs, "If you are really interested you know this. Maybe it is just the competition that creates this dislike," she says, "maybe I would like them otherwise".

The practice of mulching differed on the four farms I went to. At the Green Association they mulched with dried hay instead of plastic. Jacqueline explained to me; "I don't like plastic mulching, it's polluting". She admits that it is more effective, but that it is bad for the environment. Indeed, at the Garden we would find bits and pieces of plastic in the soil planting potatoes. They instructed us to collect the plastic as we found it, however it was not a thorough technique. Plastic mulching is much more effective than to mulch with straw. It is possible to mulch with machines or to do it manually. At the Garden, I encountered the most effective mulching as everything was done with a tractor. Christine did a mix of mulching manually and using the tractor as aid. Lastly, the most time consuming activity was to mulch with straw. At the Green Association we would first cut the long grass invading the area, followed by a few days' wait so that the grass would dry. After planting we had to water the area using a watering can followed by filling the area with hay. In order to make the hay the most effective, we had to stamp on it with our feet to make it stick. If it was a particularly windy day, we had to be extra fast or else the hay would blow away. This process is much less effective than the routine at the Garden. There, they laid out plastic with automatic watering hoses. Everything was thus ready for planting. We used an apparatus to make holes in the plastic and holes in the soil. Then we planted the plant together with some organic fertilizer.

There were indeed different techniques. At the Green Association they had three heaps with fertilizer, sand and soil, which they would mix together before planting. "Do you know why we mix the soil with compost and sand?" Fabien asked me one day. I did not know. The sand allows for oxygen to circulate in the soil, the compost will give nutrition to the plants and the soil allows for the plants to set roots. At the Garden too, I witnessed a thorough use of fertilizer together with the planting. I thus witnessed different techniques of fertilizer usage that depended on whether the farmers made their own compost or bought it in

²¹ A technique that consists of covering the soil with straw or plastic in order to prevent dehydration and weeds

²² "Formations" were courses organized by CIVAM, an organization that took care of the organic community. This provided as a platform for many of the organic farmers to get to know each other

the store. Christine for example did not use fertilizer during my stay with her. This threw me off a bit after the lecture given to me by Simon. She did however utilize a natural compost system where the food scraps were used as fertilizers as discussed in the previous chapter. I did not see this practice being used at the Garden, where all the food scraps were given to the chickens. They would therefore import their fertilizer. Consequently, the farmers were not consistently practicing the principle of recycling waste into the creation of natural fertilizers as emphasized by Sir Howard.

During a conversation with an employer at Christine's, he told me about an organic "colony" in the south of Corsica. They do everything themselves, they make their own clothes and food. They are 100 % self-sufficient. They do not sell anything; their goal is only to survive. They do not use any machines, but do everything by hand. When I heard him talk about it I sensed how I resisted this idea. I asked him whether it was a bit excessive? He replied to me that he understands them. They do not take advantage of anyone's work. By using tractors made in China you partake in a bigger capitalist system and are implicitly exploiting their work, he explains. I agreed once he put it like that. However, I asked, how about people like Christine, I do not understand why you would resist buying a product of her work. He agreed with me on that point. Further into the conversation he admitted that one person of the "colony" has a car, and did run some errands at times, and he did need gas for his car. "So maybe its not 100 %" he admitted. How do the others move around, I ask. "Maybe they don't move as much", he speculated.

This conversation highlighted for me just how far some of the farmers were willing to go in their rejection of the workings of capitalism. These self-sufficient farmers most likely live according to the same ideals as the organic farmers I stayed with, however, for these self-sufficient farmers, my informants are incorporated into the capitalist system as they use tractors from China and buy soil and seedlings from Germany. This "organic movement" is thus highly fragmented as a consequence of its positioning in a capitalist system. They all sort of agree on what values should count in directing your actions in comparison with industrial agriculture, but their local practice will differ greatly. This is thus a source of conflict, or friction between those groups.

How is it possible for an organic farmer to act in a manner that opposes their own value system without this posing difficulty for their moral well-being? Why does not Christine feel more unease about the fact that she "should" not do plastic mulching? How does the Garden so easily sell organic plants from imported soil from Germany without any sense of agitation? Why is the colony of self-sufficient farmers viewed as too extreme? As

Chris Gregory (1997) argues, values must be seen as coeval, messy and contradictory and he advocates a view on values that affirms the “coevalness of rival value systems” (Gregory 1997, 7). Besides confirming the fact that Dumont’s ideas of hierarchy and encompassment does not pan out in practice, I am still surprised by the fact that actors do not feel more obliged to follow their own value regime to the fullest, or at least feel the need to justify their practice any further. Luckily, Graeber (2013, 231) provides us with an answer and argues that:

It is value then, that brings universes into being. Whether anyone believes in the reality of these universes is usually inconsequential. This in turn, is what makes it so easy, in contexts characterized by complex and overlapping arenas of values, for so many actors simply stroll back and forth between one universe and another without feeling any profound sense of contradiction or even unease.

Graeber further argues that ontological claims are then a “kind of political move” that are made in the context of competing claims of value (Graeber 2013, 232). There are thus different “value universes” that makes sense in itself, without the need for further comparison. As argued in the previous chapter, conceptions of what are, i.e. ideas, and what ought to be, i.e. values, are interlinked. Values may thus bring with it a sort of existence that needs no further explanation other than that it simply is. They will be activated according to the current context and the needs of the actor in the moment. This brings us back to the notion of scale, and I argue that the farmers may shift their perception of scale according to the moment enabling practices that make sense in each “universe”, but when the different scales are compared they will seem contradictory. Moreover, as I understand it, it is only when different value universes collide that the actors feel the need to legitimize their view in that setting, insisting that one is more justified than another. Thus, when faced with other organic farmers it is easy to conclude that they are more “extreme” and that their own reality makes more sense.

Ultimately, these shifting and coeval values must be seen as emerging out of the farmers’ positioning within a larger scale, namely as a capitalist system where economic values dominates. This confirms Chris Gregory’s point that “value is an expression of an antagonistic power relation between people located historically, geographically and anthropologically” (33). In such a perspective, values emerge as a consequence of power relations within a capitalist system.

Competition

In this section I will look more closely at the competition component, as I view these different perspectives on how to best produce organic also as an expression of the competition the farmers feel among themselves. I argue that they feel the need to do different types of practices as the competition is felt on different levels for the organic farmers. The conflict and competition between the different organic farmers was most visible for me at the market place. I joined Christine a few times to the market to witness the dynamics there. She brought with her a sign that said “Christine’s beautiful garden”. In addition, she had a sign with the French organic certification; “AB”; Agriculture Biologique. A lot of the farmers had similar signs. It was full of people on the market that day. It was the first day of “la fête de bio” (the organic festival). There were different tastings of products at the stands. Christine offered some fermented vegetable on bread. There was a great variety in products at the market, soaps, bread, honey, wine, charcuterie and pottery. However, the vegetable stands were dominating. Everybody knows everybody here, and Christine made her rounds chatting with the different farmers. Christine sells salads, squash, chards, onions, garlic, leeks, dried thyme and fermented vegetables. She has also brought with her some cheese from the mountains, as a friend of hers asked her to sell it for her at the market. However, before the market starts, the hosts of the markets say she cannot sell the cheese, since there is already another stand selling organic cheese. Later that day she tells me: “It’s things like that, it makes me not want to participate. It’s hard to accept, but I don’t want to create any conflicts. But I do it anyway. It’s not easy!” I ask her if the reason may be that they are afraid of competition, she replies; “yes, it is probably because they are scared. If someone else produces organic cheese, then it’s all for the best (*tant mieux*), the more producers, the better, but no.” In her opinion more producers should be allowed, but the association does not look at it in that way. The other cheese stand was afraid their cheese would not be sold in the face of competition. In hindsight, I think it was easy for Christine to be so optimistic; she did enjoy the advantage of being very social and having a lot of clients. The competition from the other vegetable stands was thus not so intimidating for her.

During the market, both Christine and Nadine talk and socialize with the consumers. They frequently ask them if they want their number so that they can make deliveries. One lady asks Nadine whether she has markets in her home region, but unfortunately she does not, so she takes her number for a personal order. This form of exchange is thus based on personal

relationships and your capacity to socialize with your clients as I discussed in the previous chapter. I got the impression that once you have gotten a client, they will usually stick with you. This may create problems for those who are left out.

Louis and Dénise are some of these people. Louis told me how he struggled to sell his vegetables at the market. Everyone else has their clients, “Christine has her clients that she’s had for years. It is difficult to sell then”. As an alternative strategy, they go down to the camping area near their farm in the night, when people return from the beach. They told me that they considered quitting the market, as it yielded little profit. “Some are in solidarity and buy a little from everyone, but most of them buy from those they are happy with”. Like Christine, they want to start giving out *paniers*²³. It is a fixed income, and it is easy to know how much to harvest each time. In addition, the market steals a lot of time, they complain. For now, they are contributing to the *paniers* of Christine, but they do not feel that this is enough. Louis told us about one party they were invited to in the nearby village. “It was genius (*génial*), we got a lot of contacts and got to know people who wish to buy from us”. Social networking is thus very important to survive as an organic farmer. In addition to forming part of a value system that rejects capitalism, this system may end up rejecting the farmers themselves.

Natural Threats

Unfortunately, the economy cannot wait for nature

Worker at the Agricultural Chamber

In March, I joined the colleagues at the agricultural Chamber in order to accompany them at a meeting concerning the crisis in the chestnut industry. A particular wasp has invaded Corsica and its chestnuts. It lays its eggs inside of the chestnut “flower”, and the larva grows by feeding off the chestnut. As a result, a lot of the chestnut farmers have lost a great deal of their harvest. The chestnut is very important for the economy in Corsica. Not only does it provide the chestnut farmers with an income, but the chestnuts are important for other industries as well. Chestnut honey is a tourist product widely sold, it is made from the

²³ Every Friday Christine would hand out bags of food, or “*panier*”, that clients had ordered from her. This was a more predictable and secure system than the market.

bees that feeds of chestnut flowers. With the decline of chestnuts, it is not possible to produce the honey in the same quantity. The charcuterie is also affected. This, too, was a product widely sold in tourist magazines and is thus important for Corsica's "identity economy". Advertisement for chestnut products can be seen everywhere you turn; it is a product that plays a huge role in the construction of the Corsican identity. And according to the chestnut farmers, it is important that the local pigs are fed on a diet consisting of chestnuts, which will provide the special flavor of Corsican charcuterie.

The meeting I attended took place in a cabin up in a local village in the region of Castagniccia, up in the mountains. We drove for about two hours before we arrived. Later on I realized that we are actually in the home of one of the chestnut farmers. First, Carin (one of the representatives from the Chamber) gives a presentation for us laying out the details of the problem. She explains that it is not possible in this case to use any pesticides to get rid of this wasp. Their only solution is to introduce a new wasp. This will also lay eggs where the first wasp laid his egg. The new wasp will thus grow feeding off the larva before it has the chance to feed off the chestnut. However, with this method, it will take years before there will be a balance between the numbers of parasites and the wasp. We have to dispatch (*lancer*) many wasps in order to help nature a bit, they explain; "Unfortunately, the economy cannot wait for nature," Patricia explains to the crowd. "So we have to help nature a little". Her statement stuck with me as it clearly shows the friction that may arise between the logic of nature and the logic of the economy. They work in different logics; this may be unfortunate when we depend on nature for economic gains.

Therefore, in addition to being in competition with other farmers, the farmers are also in a sort of competition with nature. In this section I will seek to explain what I see as one of the origins of the farmers' conflicting values and competition. Namely, that there is a constant battle between the need for economic efficiency and the desire to live as ecologically as possible. However, since nature does not abide by our desires, sometimes "help" is needed. Farming may thus be turned less organic in the name of economic profit.

Natural threats are always a danger for agriculture. However, without the proper means to deal with them, they become even more dangerous. One day Christine was very upset. Tomato spiders (spider mites) had attacked her tomatoes. She explained that when this happened last year, she lost a great deal of her harvest. "Normally I have ten cases of tomatoes for the markets, but last year I only had one. It demotivated me (*ca m'a démotivé*)". She is consequently worried about this seasons' tomatoes. Considering how demotivating and destructive losing a harvest may be for one's personal finances, it is understandable that the

organic farmers at times seek solutions that favor efficiency and technical thinking. Indeed, later that day Christine showed me a machine in a catalogue that she wants to buy. It sprays an organic powder that will effectively kill the spider mites. This will make it much more effective to get the job done. It takes too long to do it by hand, she explains.

The loss of harvest can indeed be very demotivating for the farmers. As an organic farmer, you invest a lot of time and energy into your work. The output is not large, which makes it extra disastrous when your harvest is ruined. During a sociable evening at Nadine's, the main topic were Argentinian ants and the disastrous effects they have as they eat almost all the harvest. They have invaded Nadine's local region. They go after what is sweet, she explained. Christine said it hadn't arrived to her farm yet, but Nadine said, "They will come everywhere". Nadine places her naked foot on the ground and demonstrates how the ants rush up her leg within seconds. She tells me of the previous neighbor, he lost big parts of his harvest because of the ants. He gave up farming, as it got too difficult. She says there is a solution for the ants, little larvae that eat them. However, it costs about five euros for a few larvae, and you need millions in order to make it work. It is too expensive. Furthermore, they discussed other organic solutions to get rid of the ants, but everything they could think of was too expensive. They conclude that this makes it more difficult to do organic. "This is demotivating for organic agriculture," Christine laughs. Dénise looked at her and said in a serious tone; "Well, yes" (*mais oui*).

The competition the farmers experience in relation to nature as well as other farmers creates this dilemma between economic and ecological values. How might one solve this dilemma? Pierre has made great financial losses as a consequence of natural threats. He has in fact had two years of bad harvesting in a row. He did not offer me a thorough explanation as to why this was the case. He simply said that this was a consequence of organic production. In fact, he has not been able to produce olive oil in two years, which affected how he wanted to run the farm. He had chosen to set up a camping site as a way to solve his financial issues. He had thus chosen to turn to tourism as a solution. As we will see in the next chapter, agro tourism may indeed be regarded as a way to juggle the difficult balance between ecological values and economic needs. It is thus the need for money to survive in a capitalist world that will eventually force some farmers to turn to tourism. In order to survive in this world, they will sort to solutions that oppose the values inherent in their farming practice.

Back at the meeting with the chestnut farmers, I ask Patricia what will happen when the old wasp is gone, and they are left with only the new wasp. "That will never happen, we

will never get rid of them, we will never return to the same production level that we used to have. In the long run, there will be a balance between the two”. So just like the two wasps struggling to attain equilibrium, the farmers are struggling to obtain a balance between economy and ecology. In the next chapter, I will turn to agro-tourism, and argue that this form of business is indeed an effort to find a solution to this problem of economy versus ecology on a larger scale; namely, the problem of balancing tourism and agriculture.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that there are contradictory coeval values among the farmers as they juggle between the need for economic profit and to be as ecological as possible. Thus, we see that values are more juxtaposed and context based rather than binary and encompassing. However, the organic farmers judge each other according to the same value hierarchy they use in order to distinguish themselves from capitalism. Moreover, most of the farmers experience the pressure of competition to a large degree. There is thus a constant battle between the need for economic efficiency and the desire to live as ecologically as possible. I have argued that this dilemma is a consequence of their position in the capitalist system. Ironically enough, tourism may serve as a solution to this “capitalist dilemma”.

Chapter 5: Agri-Tourism

Why do some of the farmers engage in tourism? And why do others reject it? As tourism in many regards represents capitalist values, how do the farmers balance the two opposing values of capitalism and ecology in order to justify their incorporation? Moreover, the farmers' engagement in tourist activities leads us to ask what processes emerge out of the incorporation of agriculture into tourism. In the last chapter I told the story of the chestnut crisis in Corsica. I was puzzled, on the one hand, because all I heard was stories of how the chestnut industry struggled, and with it the charcuterie and the honey. On the other hand, while strolling through the city of Bastia, the shops bombarded me with various products such as chestnut flours, chestnut aperitifs, chestnut honey, as well as charcuterie in excess. It didn't make any sense, how could the chestnut products be everywhere in my vision, but nowhere to be traced in the narratives of the people around me?

This contradiction illustrates a bigger paradox related to agriculture and tourism in Corsica; namely that although the enormous influx of tourists is increasingly squeezing out the farmers by putting pressure on agricultural land, these same tourists arrive with the expectation of seeing a place that "conserves authenticity" through the production of agricultural products and the maintenance of the "savage" agricultural landscape (Tafari 2011). Therefore, in order to enter the highly industrialized and commercialized business of tourism, the farmers must display an image of being as organic and "authentic" as possible.

These paradoxes stem from the incorporation of agriculture into the logic of tourism. In fact, as Neveling and Wergin (2009, 323) argues, tourism has an effect on spatial and socio-economic forms of incorporation. This, they claim, stems from the fact that the industry conveys specific conceptions of values and morals in addition to its spatial positioning in the world economy. Therefore, I aim in this chapter to show in which ways the farmers I have talked to are incorporated into the "circuits of capital" (Pratt 2009, 161) of tourism and how they might resist this process. The process of incorporation may be reflected in various strategies that accept tourism, for example by selling products to tourists. These processes of incorporation entails an acceptance of tourists as your audience, which force the farmers to see their own actions through the "tourist gaze" (Urry 2002). Indeed, Neveling and Wergin (2009) argues that tourism may work as a "mirror of society" (334). Therefore, in contrast to chapter four where the "value-audience" consisted of no others than other organic farmers,

we will in this chapter discuss some of the implications that unfold when the tourists become the farmers' "audience". I will show that this forces the farmers to display an image in accordance with tourist expectations. The process of resistance may moreover be viewed in actions that reject tourism, for example by trying only to have local consumers and avoiding tourist spaces. By rejecting this truly global audience these farmers are also communicating something about how they too wish to be seen, namely as true to their ecological values.

In this chapter I will argue that for some farmers, agri-tourism may serve as a way to solve the value problem between ecology and economics that we saw emerge in chapter 4. It may be seen as an effort to get it all, both the profits of capitalism and the ethical values of organic farming. Lastly, agri-tourism is seen by some as a way to save agriculture from tourist pressures on land. However, considering the fact that the dilemma between ecology and economy emerges out of an interlocked position within the capitalist system, I argue that agri-tourism as a solution to this dilemma only conforms to the same capitalist logic the farmers are trying to resist. Agri-tourism may thus be seen as a technical solution à la Bateson, which again creates a feed-back loop between the paradoxes of agriculture and tourism.

Organic competition

Tourists want to see the beauty of Corsica. We create this beauty, not the hotels. The tourists want to taste the products of Corsica, we make those, not the hotels.

Pierre

This quote is taken from a conversation with Pierre about tourism. He was strongly opposed to mass-tourism, and used the detrimental effects it has on the Corsican landscape as an example. According to him, the tourists come to Corsica to enjoy the beautiful nature. This "nature" is not "natural" he argued, it has come to life as a consequence of agriculture's molding of the landscape. The beauty of Corsica is thus "created" by the farmers. Moreover, the products consumed by tourists are also a result of agriculture. Tourists should therefore go to farms whilst in Corsica, not to the hotels. Indeed, during my stay with Pierre, he was amidst the process of planning to start up a camping ground on his farming area in order to

attract tourists. He showed me some of the drawings of the “*roulettes*”²⁴ he was planning to buy. Here the tourists would have an integrated experience of Corsica, he said. This would be better than staying at a hotel, he explained. As an olive farmer, he is entitled to have 25 people on his farm, but no more, he says. However, this does not bother him. “I do not like mass tourism”, this was therefore a perfect amount of people in order to create a more authentic experience. One of his favorite topics was to explain the plans he has concerning the “*table de dégustation*” (tasting table), where he will present local products to the tourists. He wants to have an “exchange of culture”, he explains to me. For Pierre, this was how good tourism would look like. The quality of the products he sells is also important. “When I sell to tourists, I sell more than a product, I sell an experience. I sell real food, done with consideration.” He goes on, “I will have a table with taste samples, with “*charcuterie*”, for example. The tourists will know where the food is from,” he emphasizes this as an important component. “I can even show them how I make the products. It is an experience, they get good products that they can’t get at the supermarket, and they’ll know where it is from”. The tasting table is about more than just selling products; it is about selling a sensory experience that includes the taste buds as well as smell, sight, hearing and feeling. Moreover, the strategy of leading tourists outside the supermarket resembles the practice that restructures the farmers’ own consumption habits, where they get most of their products from friends and have a good insight into where their food comes from. In this way, agri-tourism involves a sort of “defetishizing” of products, as the goal is to create a link between the producer and the consumer. In this way, it is possible for Pierre to reconcile his ecologic values with the practice of tourism. For him, agri-tourism serves as a solution to his economic problems and need for an income. Indeed, Pierre was struggling with his harvest, and he admitted to me that he resorted to tourism as a way to survive financially, as he had “*une petite crise financière*” (a small financial crisis). It is important for him to state that he does not like mass tourism, thereby distancing himself and rejecting the workings of the capitalist market. Pierre does not, however, mention the fact that the consumption stops being local as the tourists have travelled long distances to get to Corsica. Nor does he acknowledge the fact that these tourists represent a threat to his very existence as a farmer, but instead he chooses to incorporate them as a part of his survival strategy.

Agri-tourism has evolved greatly over the last decades in Corsica, and it was normal by the time I got there to see farms displaying advertising with “*Camping à la ferme*”

²⁴ This is the word he used to connote a type of “gipsy trailer” on wheels. This is a more fancy form of a caravan.

(Camping on the farm), or “*Dégustation à la ferme*” (Tasting on the farm). Agri-tourism normally involves various activities of tourists sleeping, exploring or eating at the farms. During an interview with the Agricultural Chamber in Bastia, the director explained to me that originally tourism in agriculture evolved as a consequence of a “surplus of production”. A farm has produced too much, and will thereafter use the surplus to provide for tourists. In Corsica however, it is the other way around. Tourism here typically attracts more people than can be supplied with the available products. As tourism increased, more farmers were squeezed out of their land, putting them out of business. Agri-tourism in Corsica has therefore evolved as a survival strategy among the farmers, a last resort in order to continue doing farming.

The exception to the rule is the wine farmers. They are the “rich” farmers in Corsica, the people at the Agricultural Chamber explained me. As Michelle argued during one of our excursions: “They don’t have to do anything. They’re good.” However, I was explained that since the farmers sold 80 % of their wine during the tourist season, they, too, were vulnerable to changes. The wine producers were also portrayed as more cynical concerning organic production. Michelle explains that those who produce organic wine, usually do so for the money and not because they believe in it morally. “That’s because there is a great demand for organic wine, but the day the demand disappears they will do something else straight away.” Michelle argued further that as soon as wine producers decide to do tourism, they go organic. “It is obvious that if the tourists can choose between organic and non-organic, they choose organic”. Therefore, once incorporated into the logics of “agri-tourism”, it is beneficial to produce organic for one’s image vis-à-vis the tourists. To engage in organic farming may thus turn into a strategic move to increase one’s economic profit. In this way, tourists serve as that “audience” that Graeber (2001) emphasizes as important in order for values to be enacted upon. Tourism may thus serve as a setting for people to “reconsider how they identify themselves, and how they relate to the rest of the world” (Abram and Waldren 1997, 10). Consequently, even for farmers inhabiting mostly economic values, the ecological aspect becomes integrated into the image projected outwards. This is quite in contrast to the motivations we have seen earlier among the organic vegetable farmers. This reflects Joseph Heckman’s observation that “In the early years of the organic movement and before there was a significant market for organic products, organic farming was done out of a passion for the philosophy. Today, with the growing demand for organic products, price premiums are, in some cases, attracting new converts to organic farming for financial survival” (Heckman

2006, 148). Thus, organic agriculture incorporated into agri-tourism becomes the ultimate survival strategy for farmers.

Together with Michelle and his co-worker Jean, we were on our way to Aléria, to meet Christian, a wine farmer transitioning to tourism. Beforehand, I was told that his motives to transition to tourism were purely economic. At the vineyard, Christian shows us around. I noticed how much more aesthetically pleasing the environment was here compared to the other farms we had visited. When I asked him why he has chosen to do agri-tourism Christian said: "I'm a farmer, not a merchandiser. I love sharing with people". He says wine is good because you can share it with others. "It is also because of financial aspects, but we like to receive people. We make wine because it is best when shared. Some people can touch others with art, dance etc, I can't do any of that. But I have the possibility of touching people with my profession". In a similar manner as Pierre, Christian wants to have a tasting table for the tourists. Here, he wants to share food from farmers in the local community while the tourists taste his wine. "I want to sell a part of me, I want them to taste it and know it is me". Although his motives may be financial, Christian, like Pierre, emphasizes sensory experiences and authentic products in justifying why he has chosen to do agri-tourism.

Christian and Pierre may have good reasons to emphasize these aspects. Jeff Pratt argues that consumers are also trying to capture an aura of authenticity through the consumption of products "that are valued precisely because their connection to the world of production is known. In that way authenticity is not a survival from some prelapsian world of peasants and artisans, but precisely a shadow cast by an economy organized around exchange value" (Pratt 2007, 295). This focus on authenticity is a natural outcome of the workings of a capitalist economy where the consumer has been alienated from his own food. Tourism may thus serve as a temporary escape from this capitalist reality, and give the tourist a feeling of going back to simpler and better times. Agri-tourism is therefore conforming to the tourist utopia by presenting an imagined reality of bliss. However, this tourist utopia is ultimately incompatible with the farmers' own utopian projects, especially in regard to notions of locality. Therefore, agri-tourism as a solution to the dilemma of economy versus ecology may be seen as just another way of conforming to the logics of capitalism.

In contrast to Pierre and Christian, some farmers resisted the process of turning to tourism more than others. Moreover, in addition to resisting agri-tourism, some farmers would simply resist the idea of selling products to tourists. Most of the farmers emphasized the importance of having local costumers, and not rely on tourists. Christine had little to do with tourists on a day-to-day basis, and had managed to build up a clientele consisting mainly

of locals. Dénise and Louis were happy that the local restaurant in their village accepted to buy vegetables from them and used them in their recipes. Dénise was grateful and stated it was important to get integrated into the local market: “We sell a lot during tourist season, but we want to deliver to locals, not to be dependent on tourism. Tourism doesn’t interest me (*Le tourisme, ça m’intéresse pas*). We want to work with locals, but sure, tourism helps.” As I showed in the previous chapter, getting local clients may not always be easy since it takes a lot of time and socializing to build up a client base. Dénise and Louis complained to me that they did not have enough clients. They contemplated going down to the tourist camping sites during the evenings, “when they come back from the beach” and sell their products there. As I have already argued, Christine was very social and knew a lot of people, it may thus have been easier for her to show contempt for the tourist industry as she was less dependent on them. In order to be able to reject your incorporation into the circuits of capitalism, you will first have to be accepted into the circuits of the local market in the community. Dénise and Louise both wanted to have mostly local clients, however, they admitted that it surely helped to have tourists around as a back up plan. Although they clearly articulated a rejection of tourism, they also felt rejected by the locals and were therefore more inclined towards engaging with tourism.

During my visits to different farms in Corsica with the Agricultural Chamber, I also met George, who was a farmer planning to start agri-tourism in Cap Corse. I came to George’s farm with Patricia, a worker at the Agricultural Chamber. Patricia works within agri-tourism and was there that day to recruit him to “Bienvenue à la ferme” (Welcome to the farm). This is an organization in France that promotes tourism on farms. They collect information on all the farms in Corsica in a leaflet to produce advertisement material and to make the information available for tourists. Patricia explained that the farmers then acquire this brand, which is known among most people. In the same way that organic may work as a brand to attract tourists, this functions the same way.

George had a distillery; he harvested olives and different citrus fruits to produce alcohol. He was also building a number of rooms to host tourists. Upon arrival, the construction was in full action. He took us for a tour of the house. The rooms were very modern with their own bathrooms. He did not build for more capacity than five families at the time. He explained it would not be approved as agri-tourism if he rents out more than five rooms. The limit had been set that way so that farmers will still have to concentrate on the farming, and not entirely rely on tourism. This prevents an exploitation of the system, and that the farmers abandon their farming practices. He stated that anything more was too much

anyway. He took us for a tour in his little shop. Here, he had a wide selection of his alcoholic beverages displayed, but there were also a wide range of other products. In contrast to Pierre and Christian, George was planning to sell these products. I looked around in the shop and I was not surprised to see a lot of the same products that you may buy elsewhere in Corsica. He has different types of candy, honey, and different types of bread spreads. The symbol of Corsica, the “Maure’s head” is displayed on his products as well as on the wall. He sells postcard, different stones shaped like Corsica, local products and alcohol. The space is clearly constructed to serve the “tourist gaze” (Urry 2002). I asked where the products come from and he answers bluntly that they come from local farms nearby. “These are products from authentic Corsica. All of them are bought directly from the producers, no middlemen”. George, like others, emphasizes the importance of a local experience as well as authenticity. Outside the shop, there is a large terrace, where people may come to taste the different drinks and socialize. He has also built a small stage. Here, he wants Corsican musicians to play during summer. The tourists will be drinking Corsican drinks and listening to Corsican music at the same time, he has thus constructed what one may see as the “ultimate authentic experience,” maximizing the sensory experiences for the tourist.

George explained to me that he produces organic, and has done so for some time, but he lacks the certification. Now, as he is transferring to tourism, he wants to get certified. This would allow him to attract more tourists, he explained. In an equal manner as the wine farmers, George was officially “switching” to organic production now that he was also turning to tourism. As already argued, the act of “going organic” may be seen as a strategy to attract tourists. However, I would claim that George’s organic values were already there from the beginning. George was merely lacking the certification in order to convert these organic values to economic profit. Thus, a George without the tourist “audience” would still be a George inhabiting organic values, but as soon as the audience, i.e. the tourists, arrive, he has the opportunity to earn money on his already existing values, and this creates the need to get certified. Without certification, the audience would perhaps not validate his “performance” as real and would not reward him financially. Hence, the tourists work as a mirror, in which the farmers are forced to see their own reflection as organic and authentic. On the other hand, as George did not have the organic certification yet, I could see that there was a strong emphasis on the Corsican “brand”, while the organic “brand” was still downplayed. The other farmers did not decorate their products with the Corsican flag or name, while here at George’s, I saw the symbol of Corsica everywhere. This reminded me of the same products sold in the supermarket. As George did not have the organic “capital” (Bourdieu 1984), he had to rely on

the notion of “localness”. In the next section I will take a closer look on the terms local and organic, and see why it is profitable for the tourist industry that these two are interrelated.

Organic or Local?

In chapter four I showed how the farmers might define organic agriculture in different ways and how conflict arose over the definition. In the same manner, the difference between local and organic is not clear-cut. Pratt (2007, 288-289) lists a few reasons why farmers normally choose to produce locally. First of all, they do so for environmental reasons. It is generally better that food is consumed as closely as possible to the origin of production. Secondly, it may be a political project to construct local economies outside the capitalist system. Thirdly, it may be a project of food sovereignty in order to enhance local farmers opportunities. It may also be an effort to create closer relations between consumers and producers by cutting out the middlemen and selling directly to consumers. This benefits the farmers but also gives an increased value to the consumers. Finally, local food is generally viewed as being quality food, which is becoming increasingly important. I would claim that all of these reasons for producing local correspond with the organic farmers' own motivations for producing organic. Indeed, as Hilary Tovey (1997, 26) argues, localism, or "the prioritizing of local and communal relations, especially non-market relations", is one of the main priorities of why people choose to produce and consume organic. Considering the fact that most tourists are drawn to the brand "local", as local food is often understood as "culture" (Jacobsen 2004, 70), a consumer faced with the choice between organic or local, would perhaps not intuitively know the difference between the two.

In what way is it then possible to say that local products are something different than organic products? Even among the farmers there existed a certain ambivalence concerning the choice between local and organic. Some of them were highly skeptical towards organic products bought at the supermarket. Although organic food labels have stricter requirements concerning pesticides that the “brand” local does not include, organic production has been transformed by the increasing dominance of commercial interests (Pratt 2009, 156). A consequence has therefore been that “organic food production has been largely re-structured by the processes characteristic of the industrial agricultural system to which it was once in opposition” (Pratt 2009, 158). In a conversation with H       I asked if she only ate organic food. She bluntly replied with a “NO!” and added: “That’s an industry too.” She preferred

buying local food, and was skeptical of organic branding. You can never be sure of how the product was made if you buy it from the supermarket. Chances are they too have been produced under circumstances that resemble those of industrial production. Moreover, the relationship between local non-organic food and imported organic food was at times subject for discussion. Generally, I got the impression that if the food was not local, it did not matter if it was organic. During one of the warm June days I was out working with Tom and the others, we had a lively discussion concerning local versus organic. Tom liked to talk and started one of his speeches, pausing temporarily from his work:

The Spanish tomatoes suck! They use a lot of pesticides in Spain. Everything that's imported from another country sucks (c'est nul). You always buy food from the biggest businesses abroad, so even if it is organic there you will not get it. Even buying French food when abroad is pointless! With the new regulations in the EU, organic isn't real organic. You may have ten percent non-organic and it will still be labeled organic. You could feed the hens non-organic before they've started laying eggs, and switch to organic once they start laying (he laughs). You should just screw the labels and just buy local. Local is better than organic anyway. If you go to the farm and see that everything is done right, you don't need a label. Local food is better for the environment than to buy imported organic. It is worse for me, but better for the environment (laughing). I prefer that it's worse for me than for the environment (laughing). I don't just buy organic like Christine, I try to eat local. Like now, I don't eat tomatoes, I don't see the point to eat them outside season. I would rather eat local Corsican products than organic from the continent.

For Tom, it was thus more important to eat local food according to season, than to eat organic. The best organic food then is locally produced. We may thus distinguish between two types of organic food: Industrially produced organic, and locally produced organic. It goes without saying that the farmers will always choose the latter. However, when faced with the choice between industrially produced organic and local food, the choice will fall upon the local option. The problem is that we may further distinguish between two types of local produce in Corsica. On the one hand, there are the “real” local products that you get when buying products directly from the farmer, i.e those products without labels. It is these products that Tom insists that we should eat. On the other hand, you have the imported products mostly found at the supermarkets and at restaurants, usually labeled as “Corsican”.

The hierarchy of the different types of organic and local food from the point of view of the organic farmers may be represented as in figure 10:

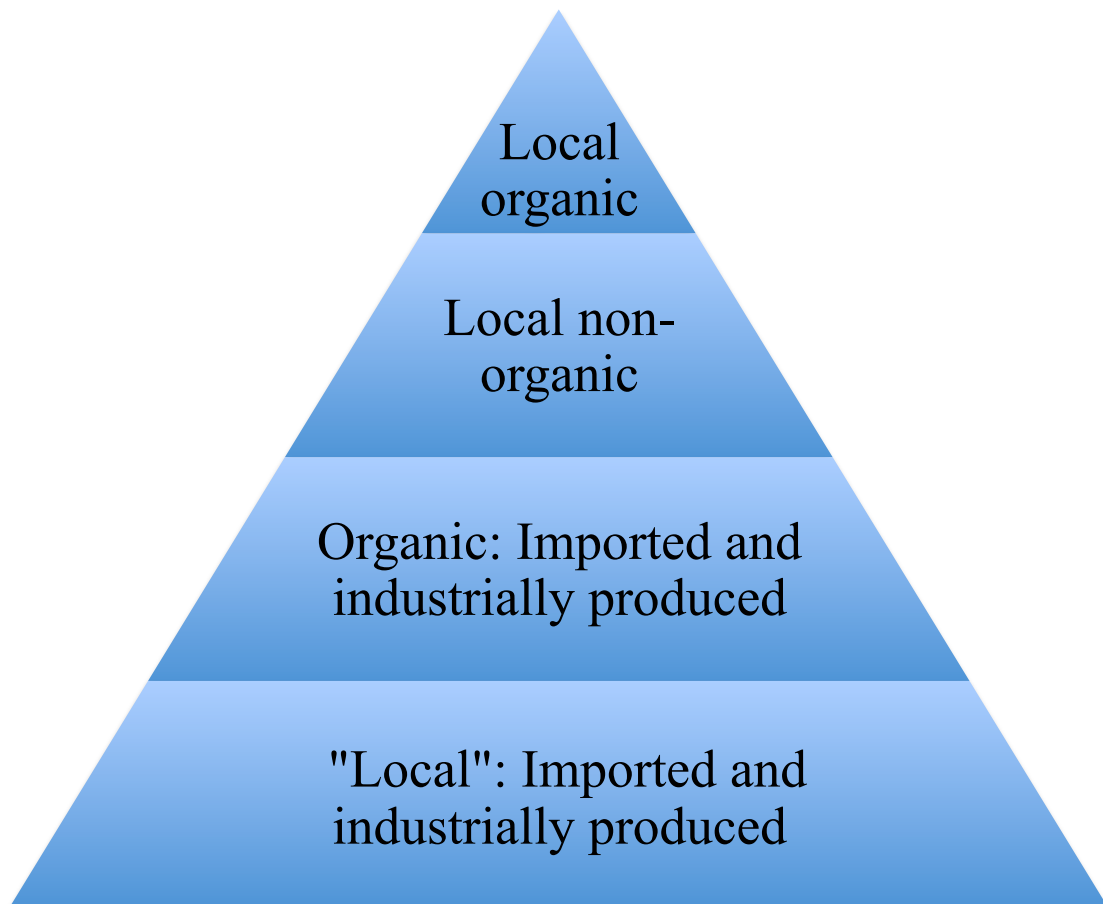


Figure 10: Food hierarchy among organic farmers in Corsica: local versus organic.

At the top of the hierarchy we find local organic food. This is the ultimate food as it consists of the two key ecological values; organic and local. All the farmers I stayed with produced this type of food. The next two either lack local or organic, but since locality is considered paramount, this will be prioritized. At the bottom of the hierarchy we find imported industrial food marketed as local. As we will see, the tourist industry exploits the positive connotations implicated in the brand “local”, which makes it difficult for the consumer to distinguish between “real” and “fake” local products. Therefore, it is this last category that most tourists end up consuming.

Local products and Tourism

One hot week-end in June I was out hiking in the “désert des Agriates” with my German friend Meli, a three day trip along the preserved coastline in north of Corsica. On our second day we stumbled upon a German professor from the University of Corté. We ended up talking with him for quite some time, as it turned out, he was doing research on preservation sites here in Corsica. The first thing he said was: “Did you know that 90 % of the charcuterie that is sold here isn’t Corsican? They don’t have enough pigs. They import the meat they sell”. I was stupefied by this fact; I could not believe they would trick tourists like that. But indeed, after closer research you will find that in fact, 86 % of the consumed goods in Corsica are imported (Andreani 2010, 185). However, most of the food, as in the case of the charcuterie, is advertised as a traditional Corsican product. Moreover, the season for eating charcuterie is during the winter, so selling local charcuterie during summer makes no sense. Upon reflection I remembered my visit to the chestnut farmers up in the mountains in March, where during lunch we enjoyed fresh local charcuterie. During the meal everyone would emphasize the authenticity of the product, pointing out that this was the “real” stuff. I suddenly understood why I saw Corsican chestnut products everywhere, but continued hearing that the industry is in a crisis.

This reflects what I was told at the Agricultural Chamber, namely that the influx of tourists during the summer is so huge that Corsica does not have the capacity to feed them all. As one of my informants asked rhetorically, “there is not enough agriculture to feed 300 000 people, how will it then be enough to feed 3 000 000?” The small percentage of farmers and exploitations are incapable of satisfying the increased demand during summer. This creates supplementary importations from the continent (Andreani 2010, 176). Still, these same products are being marketed as local and as mentioned earlier, all products sold in Corsica are labelled “local” or “Corsican”.

In June, Christine received a new “WOOOFer”, Sandra. She was French and not that familiar with Corsica. She had just come back from a week of backpacking the GR20 trip. She was very excited about it. Gilles, who is a guide on this same tour, entered in a conversation with her about her experiences. Sandra would enthusiastically explain how they got served all this authentic Corsican food. “What food did you get?” Gilles asked skeptically. Sandra started naming all types of traditional dishes. For each dish Gilles would

exclaim in a monotone voice; “No”, “No”, “No”. According to him, none of these given dishes were local food from Corsica. “The name maybe”, he said, “but the commodities used were imported from elsewhere.” Gilles continues to explain. “The charcuterie sold in Corsica doesn’t come from Corsica.” “Why would they lie about this?” I ask, still in awe by this information. “Yes, they lie to you. Its capitalism, it is cheaper to import figs from Tunis than to serve fresh from here”. I ask how he found out they weren’t Corsican when he was working as a tour guide.

I also thought they were Corsican in the beginning. They lied to me. I found out eventually. I saw the truck coming in in the morning with meat from the continent. I learned about the seasonality of the meat, and I learned how many pigs there are in Corsica and compared it to the number of tourists. You have to look at the commodity chain. There are so many commodities that are season based; fish for example, the season is during winter. People do not think. They buy fish at a restaurant without thinking if it’s real or not. Everything you buy in restaurants is imported, all the meat. There are a few exceptions, but entrecote, for example, is always imported. People buy salmon without reflecting whether it comes from here. “Brocciu”, for example, is a typical Corsican commodity, however the season is during winter, out of season they will make it using milk powder. That is called something else; “Bros”. Some people are honest about it and write it on the menu, but most of them are not honest. There are very few producers of Brocciu left in Corsica. There’s nothing that is Corsican. Pasta, meat, cheese in some cases. It depends on the brand. The figs aren’t Corsican, they’re processed in Corsica, but the products are imported. A good example is the “donkey sausages”. I know a guy who makes this product. He said that he had never killed a donkey. “But why do you then sell donkey sausages?” I ask. He replies; “because the tourists want it. They want to buy donkey sausages from Corsica, thinking it is typically Corsican, even though no one in Corsica eats it”. Real agriculture, local agriculture, for example charcuterie, is consumed in the village. Real charcuterie costs maybe 40 euro. Tourists do not want real, they want cheap. They’re used to going to the supermarket seeing sausages costing 3-4 euros. You don’t want to spend money on food anymore; it is what we spend the least money on. Even though that is what nourishes us, it’s the basis of life. You would rather spend

money on an iphone or a vacation. But life is human relations, life is not jet skiing in Porto Vecchio²⁵. Life is togetherness.

The industry is thus branding their products “Corsican” and this will increase the price of the product as well as the profit. This problem highlights the paradox of tourism: the more tourists arriving in Corsica, the more they demand local and authentic products, the more this will create a need for industrialized production. Therefore, when relating to tourists the food will be projected as local even if the food has been produced in industrial agriculture. This further illustrates the problematic consequences of the image of utopia projected to tourists. This may also explain why farmers view it as necessary to turn to organic labeling in order to attract more consumers, as it is not enough to produce local and environmentally friendly when there are larger brands competing for the same costumers as you.

So far, we have seen that agri-tourism may serve as a solution to the dilemma of ecology and the need for an income. May it also serve as a solution to the larger problematic relationship between tourism and agriculture? For tourists wanting to pursue *their* ecological values by consuming from the top of the food hierarchy, is the solution to solely consume products on the farms in order to avoid this increasing trend of imported industrialized products? Finally, is the solution to tourist pressures on land to lead the tourists away from hotels and to the farms?

Agri-Tourism as a solution?

Most of the farmers I talked to showed ambivalence around tourism, especially mass-tourism. For a few, agri-tourism served as a way to balance this ambivalence. As Pierre would say, it is okay to do tourism as long as it is not “mass-tourism”. Initially, during my conversations with the employees at the Agricultural chamber, I got the feeling that if they just developed the practice of agri-tourism, they would perhaps be able to keep mainstream tourism at bay, and in this way, it could be possible to preserve agriculture in Corsica. Indeed, the director argued, “agri-tourism is the way to save Corsica.” Here, by “saving Corsica”, he meant “saving agriculture”. Corsican culture is thus equated with agriculture. He is worried though: “Those higher up in the state do not believe in agri-tourism, they think that

²⁵ Porto-Vecchio is a city south in Corsica, one may say this is the most touristic city in Corsica. I often heard people talking in a condescending way about Port-Vecchio as this represented the ultimate tourist place.

agriculture will disappear.” He explains to me: “All the production inlands is disappearing, there is no more bread left, for example. It is not a good relationship between the two,” he says remarking upon the relationship between agriculture and tourism. A great concern for the chamber is whether the farmers will leave agriculture to pursue tourism, as it is more profitable to do tourism. That is why Pierre and George had imposed restrictions on the amount of guests they had. This would ensure that they continued to do agriculture. The director emphasizes the importance of the continuation of agriculture, if it disappears, they will lose their products and also their Corsican identity. The director explains to me, “The concrete (*béton*) is elsewhere, that exists elsewhere. If urbanization takes over, we could lose our identity”, he says. “We have to preserve the image of Corsica, if not, we will lose our identity. Therefore, we must make sure the hotels doesn’t take over.”

The director is promoting agri-tourism as a way to save Corsican agriculture from tourist pressures on land. By extension, he sees agri-tourism as a way to conserve the Corsican landscape. Preserving food production is thus vital in preserving a specific landscape. The effort to save Corsican agriculture from threats of tourism, however, is through the logics of tourism. Therefore, by developing agri-tourism in response to tourist threats, they are in a way fighting fire with fire. This creates a feedback loop between agriculture and tourism, the two enforcing each other. As tourism is increasing, agriculture is threatened through increased pressure on agricultural land. As agriculture is diminishing, imported products increase, thus minimizing the “authentic experience”. As a response, the farmers turn to tourism to survive, stressing the identity of their products to attract tourists. As more tourists arrive, this puts an even greater pressure on the demand for land. This forces even more farmers to turn to tourism as a response. These mechanisms starts processes of accelerated change where agri-tourism is seen as way out of the loop, even though it might just be the thing that keeps the wheel turning. Agri-tourism may be seen as an effort to solve the “double bind”, i.e. the friction between economics and ecologies; however, the solution to the problem might just be the factor that perpetuates it. I argue, following the logic of Bateson that the solution of agri-tourism is just another “technical solution” that fails to recognize the underlying issues contributing to the problem; namely the problem of tourist pressures on land. This solution is in a way a “capitalist solution” to the problems of ecology and economy as it conforms to the same capitalist logic the farmers are trying to resist. This leads to a “feed-back loop” where it is impossible to find a way out of the system. In the next chapter I will look an alternative way to escape this loop, by looking at the underlying issues around land.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have asked the question why organic farmers do tourism. I have highlighted a few paradoxes that arise through the farmers' incorporation into tourism, namely that the farmers must portray an image of being as "authentic" and "organic" as possible. I have further indicated that this demand for local and authentic products merely causes an increase of imports from mainland France. I have also shown different processes of incorporation and resistance and argued that for some farmers agri-tourism is a way to combine their ecological values as well as their need for economic profit. Agri-tourism may thus be the solution to some of the ambiguities I explored in chapter 4 as well as a way to temporarily solve the problem of tourist pressure and the decline in agriculture. It may be a feeble effort though, as this solution to the problem of tourism, might just bring with it more tourism. Agri-tourism, in this regard, is a "capitalist solution" to the value dilemma of the farmers, by creating a feedback loop that forge an unwanted accelerated change towards even more urbanization and construction. It is exactly this threat of urbanization I will discuss further in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: Land

What happens in the interface between agriculture and tourism? In chapter five, we saw that the Agricultural Chamber viewed agri-tourism as a way to save agriculture, and consequently Corsica's landscape, from urbanization. This chapter will discuss these issues by looking at land, and the current land conflict between agriculture and tourism in Corsica. By land, I especially mean the littoral area, as it is here we may localize the on-going conflict between farmers and the tourist industry. Jean-Marie Furt and Caroline Tafani define the littoral space as an ensemble of relations that constitute the populations (permanent and temporary) in this littoral space and that are the basis for the practices of this geographical location, the usages, conflicts, and modes of resource management as well as the activities that are unfolding here (Furt and Tafani 2014, 20). By leaning on Chris Gregory (1997) in *Savage money*, where he defines land as a good, I will argue that land is a major arena in which value conflicts are performed; we may consequently locate the littoral as the physical interface, i.e. the actual meeting point where the conflict is enacted. A response to my research question, namely what values, practices and actions concerning Corsica as a landscape among the organic farmers emerge in the interface between organic farming and tourism in Corsica, may thus be found in this geographical space. In contrast to the discussion so far, in this chapter I argue that land is not a value in itself, but the medium through which value may be realized and that it is this function that renders land as the "supreme good of humanity" in Chris Gregory's words. Therefore, the act of realizing ecological values through land will consequently mold the Corsican landscape in a favorable direction for the farmers.

Farmers and Land

There's land, there's sun, and there's dirty money

Farmer from documentary



Figure 11: The difficulty in getting access to land has resulted in a situation where young farmers reside temporarily in trailers and yurts. Photo taken by author.

When I first met Christine, I was at first surprised by the fact that she rents land, and does not own. However, it turned out that this is very common among young farmers. Indeed, I did not meet any young farmers that owned their land. This section will show that the problem of land among young farmers is a question of access. As Christophe argued, “all of the land is already sold, the fight is now about whether or not to construct on it.” An elderly farmer depicted in the documentary concludes starkly that “for a young farmer who wants to settle here, (*a mon avis*) it’s not just a fight, it’s a fight while you’re nailed to a cross.” He contends that “there are regions in France where land is empty, available, but you can’t even give it away or pass it along, it’s not like that here (*ici c’est pas le cas*). There’s available land, but it’s inaccessible.” What factors contribute to the issue of access?

One day, I was out driving with Michele; we are talking about land prices in the car. I ask him how much it costs to buy land as a farmer compared to those who wish to use land for construction. Instead of replying, Michele stops the car at a lookout point. He brings me to the edge of a cliff, where we can see the whole of Patrimonio²⁶. The view is beautiful; we can see all the wine fields stretching out before they meet the ocean. He points towards the fields, and starts to explain, “if you want to do agriculture, you may buy land for 5 euros per square meter. However, if you want to buy land for construction, it costs 300 euros per square meter. If you can choose, you prefer to sell your land for construction, and not for agriculture”.

In this way, the pricing system implicitly motivates landowners to sell their land with the purpose to construct, and the economically motivated ones may avoid selling to farmers. Indeed, Christine attributed the difficulty of getting land access here in Corsica to the pricing system: “As a young farmer, the land is cheaper. I can choose to buy the land as it is, or I can say I want the agricultural price, but the seller may then deny selling on the basis of the cheap price. If even a small plot of land is constructible, they may get 6 million euros for it.” Louis and Dénise have become acutely familiar with the land system’s consequences for farmers. They rent a land plot where they cultivate organic vegetables, but live in an apartment in the village up the promontory. “We are having some problems with the building permit. There are too many that misuse the cheap land you get as farmers”. I asked them to explain this further too me: “People have a wish to construct, but want to take advantage of the cheap prices. Thus, they say they wish to farm, buy the land and construct something without actually doing any farming. You have to prove that you have good intentions. We have to prove ourselves first (*faire épreuve*)”. A few days later I was out driving with Nadine, and we drove past a huge building with the writings “apiculture” on it. “They are constructing a hotel,” Nadine remarks. “They have stopped producing honey altogether.” Assuming that people who buy cheap land want to use it for construction, mayors are often suspicious of new farmers arriving. Didier was aware that they were in a trial period still. We walk around the estate and they show us a quite large shed. This is Dénise’s workshop where she makes pottery for sale. I ask why they have been given permission to build the shed. Didier explains to me that the mayor has given them a verbal agreement. However, they have localized the shed out of sight from the road. Indeed, the building was hidden behind the trees facing the

²⁶ Patrimonio is a place in north of Corsica, it is mostly renowned for its wines and is considered as Corsica’s version of Bourdeaux

road. “If someone sees it, and presses charges we do not have any documents to show for ourselves.”

The pricing system has thus made it difficult to buy land, but even to get a leasing contract poses problems for some. Christine explains in the documentary how she struggled before finding her current land plot:

For five years I wanted to grow things, but had no land, it was hard. It's hard to seek out people and ask for a bit of land. (...) The big problem with renting land is it might get zoned for construction and that means money. People don't want to lease it out because if the value shoots up or it becomes buildable, they are blocked. So they'll let you farm, but as soon as you want to sign a lease or buy, it stops there.

Since farmers give value to land by taking care of it, most landowners find it advantageous to have farmers attend to the abandoned land. However, if the farmer wishes to rent or get a contract, the landowners hesitate as the land might get zoned for construction. Christine has been lucky in getting a solid contract as she got access to her land plot through a landholder's association in *Lesia* that consists of 17 landholders who wish to have their land used for agriculture. I met another young couple that struggled to find land to rent. They attributed the land issue to the problem of inheritance: “No one wants to sell their land since land is inherited internally in the family.” I ask whether the landowners do not need the money. Apparently not the woman says. She continues to explain:

A land plot may have 40 owners because different people in the family have inherited it, in that regard, not much can be earned on the small land they own. We have received offers that we may come and take care of land in exchange for low rent, or in exchange for some vegetables etc, but then we have to do it without a contract. If we sign a contract, it's like saying the land doesn't belong to them anymore. However, they need someone to take care of their land. This is land that was once cultivated, but then abandoned by the farmers; the land has decayed as a consequence. What has happened here in Lesia is that the mayor doesn't want the work of the former generations to go to waste.

When I asked them what was the main problem with agriculture these days, they were very clear in their answer; “there you go, inheritance!” (*beh voila, héritage*). Indeed, when I

asked Christine why the Corsicans would not sell the land, she shrugged; “I don’t know, I don’t understand it, the Corsicans are very weird about their land.” Thus, some of the farmers emphasized a particular Corsican identity displayed in the way that land was dealt with.

These stories illustrate the fact that land is a scarce resource in Corsica. It is scarce, not because it is lacking, but because it is difficult getting access to the legal entitlements that would allow ownership and making profit. Micheal Lambek (2013) points out, following Bourdieu, that scarcity may be seen as the basis of value (145). Scarcity provokes competition and exclusion, which conjures up what Lambek calls performative acts. We have already seen the performative acts, or put otherwise, “social acts of recognition” (Bourdieu 1997, 51) of the organic farmers in chapter three. This focus on scarcity as a key component of land brings me to Gregory and his definition of a “good” as;

a priceless non-commodity whose value as a good is to be explained with reference to historically specific relations of consanguinity; and that when goods become commodities the price they fetch may be higher or lower than that which market valuation theories would predict. A central defining characteristic of goods, then, is scarcity and the question arises as to how the scarcity is culturally created and maintained (Gregory 1997: 74).

Gregory argues further that this is what differentiates land from gifts and commodities as it may be considered a good. He argues further that land is “a good” that is valued because it stores the memories of ancestors in society (Gregory 1997: 79). Through inheritance, land acquires “powerfully sentimental meanings “by its possession “and transference and in the memories that it evokes among descendants” (Gregory 1997: 73). This attachment to land may contribute to what Christine and the others see as the Corsicans’ “weird relationship to land”. The Corsicans do not want to sell their land due to familial attachments, which is why the couple view inheritance as the main problem. Scarcity may thus be created through these cultural attachments to the meaning of land. However, as I have already pointed out, scarcity is also created through the potential for profit that it also represents. If you own land that is located within a non-constructible zone, there is a possibility that this will change in the same manner that local politics changes. These attachments create a situation where landowners do not wish to sell, and young farmers struggle while looking to rent or at least to cultivate for a few advantages. In consequence, I view the cultural construction of scarcity in Corsica as a mixture of cultural attachments to land, as well as a desire to profit from it. These issues

show some of the problems that emerge when land is integrated into a market logic. Karl Polanyi argues that the incorporation of land into the market does not make sense since land is inherently social. Land is thus just an expression of social relations as it epitomizes “no other than the human beings themselves of which every society consists” (Polanyi 1944, 71) Polanyi further argues that the commodification of land is an essential part of the economic system, but land is not a commodity as it has not been produced for sale, a fact which makes land a “fictitious” commodity (Polanyi 1944, 72). This explains why it is difficult for young farmers to get access to land through a capitalist logic; it is too deeply ingrained in the social life of Corsica.

Although it is enormously difficult for young farmers to settle down on a suitable plot of land, I do not want to give the impression that things become easy once you have acquired land. While access is the problem for young farmers seeking to settle down, for the already established farmers, the problem consists of managing the pressure to sell the land. Pierre, in his late sixties, pointed out to me how “if I wanted to, I could have been rich. If I wanted to do tourism I could have made 1 million euros a year, but that’s not the case with olive oil.” He explained to me that he was often pressured to sell his land, a land that has been owned by his family for generations. Moreover an employee at the Agricultural Chamber explained to me that regularly elderly farmers sell off their land in exchange for huge sums of money. “Who can blame them, they get a big offer and it is tempting. They can retire with a lot of wealth”. Christoph argued in a similar manner: “They (i.e. elderly farmers) get offered to sell their land for a lot, lot of money. 1 million Euros, wow! In addition, there is only old people left, and then it is more difficult to resist the money”. It thus requires courage and determination to not sell your land. Pierre’s girlfriend, Céline, explained to me that there are a lot of people coming who want to buy property. Referring to Pierre, she says, “it is very brave what he does, especially at his age. There are a lot of people who want to buy this property, but Pierre always declines. He doesn’t want Corsica to be touristified.” She explains how people are offered a lot of money for their property, and they cannot decline because this opens up too many possibilities for them. She considers Pierre brave, because the farming does not reward him financially like selling the land could have done. Céline continues, “there are almost no farmers left in Corsica. There is financial support, but it isn’t enough. They barely survive on what they make now and the agriculture they do.” Considering that Pierre, as well as most other farmers struggle financially and “barely survive”, it must be tempting to sell your land when agriculture gives so little revenue. She emphasizes, “it is about preserving culture. It is more than money. It is really a shame.”

Following this statement, the logic that makes it difficult for new farmers to acquire land may also hinder the older farmers from selling. Pierre resists selling, partly because of his cultural attachments to the land he manages. However, he also makes it clear that, for him, it is also about maintaining ecological values and not about the money.

For Pierre, his motivation for not selling land lies in its potential to express his ecological values through the act of farming. Farming is, according to Gregory, “the production of commodities by means of goods” (1997, 123). These commodities express the values of Pierre, as organic produce work as “tokens of value” (Graeber 2001, 76) as I have already argued in chapter three. Therefore, organic farming may be seen as the production of *ecological values* by means of *land*. Following the same logic we may argue that tourism, too, produces commodities, in the form of hotels and apartment complexes, by means of goods. Tourism may therefore be defined as the production of economic values by means of land. We may thus attribute the landowners’ reluctance of selling land to farmers to its potential of expressing economic values. Land is therefore the physical materialization of the interface between agriculture and tourism.

This fact poses a concrete problem for a mayor who is unsure of her own value hierarchy, as I will explore now, local politicians have the power to decide the usage of land. The mayors are thus located directly at the interface between agriculture and tourism. Indeed, back at the look-out point, I was perplexed after Michele had explained to me how the land prices were manipulated in order to construct. “But aren’t there rules?” I ask naively. “Rules are there to be broken. Just ask city hall and they will give you the license to construct. This is a big problem in Corsica.”

Political dilemmas

In order for agriculture and tourism to coexist, you need good governance. That does not exist in Corsica.

Caroline Tafani²⁷

In this section I wish to illustrate the complicated relationship between local politics and property speculation in relation to the conflict surrounding the littoral area. The first article in the littoral law of 1986 defines the littoral as “a geographical entity that requires a specific development politics, of protection and development (*mise en valeur*)” (Breton 2014, 151, My translation). The littoral law thus promotes two concepts that in many ways contradict each other, namely protection and development, which makes it a materialization of the “double bind” between ecology and economy. Moreover, the French term “*mise en valeur*” that I have translated as “development” literally means, “put into value”. So the task of the politicians is thus to put the use of land into value. According to Graeber, “this is what politics is always ultimately about: not just to accumulate value, but to define what value is, and how different values (...) dominate, encompass, or otherwise relate to one another; and thus at the same time, between those imaginary arenas in which they are realized. In the end, political struggle is and must always be about the meaning of life” (2013, 228). This is poignantly expressed in the statement of a wine farmer in the documentary:

We’ve gone from having almost all farmland to suddenly having land that is a product with lots of uses, at first mainly aimed at attracting people (accueil) which is to say real estate and finally at welcoming tourists. So the role of the farmer has been greatly diminished. The problem, it seems to me (me semblait-il), is that public officials and citizens haven’t defined the land’s function, if we want to envision a good life on this land in the coming decades, it seems to me that sooner or later we have to clearly define what the land is for (définir clairement le vocation de sol).

²⁷ Interview in Corte the 11th of March 2014

Crawford Macpherson has argued that the legal right to own property must always be grounded in a public belief of what is morally right (1978, 11). Moreover, politics and power always need to be justified in the eyes of the population, and private property is only justified in terms of those functions judged valuable by the society (Tawney 1978, 150). The discussion surrounding land is therefore a discussion on what the function of it currently is, and what the function ought to be (Macpherson 1978, 11), i.e. about justification for land usage. Macpherson argues further that “the ultimate justification of any institution of property (...) has always been the individual right to life- not merely to continued existence once born, but to a fully human life: a ‘good life’” (Macpherson 1978, 12). As we can see in the farmer’s statement above, he promotes the need to define the function of the land in order to live the good life. In an equal manner, Gregory argues that “the function of the community ... is to prevent destruction and to equalize land” (1997, 112). Through the farmers’ performative acts of recognition we see an effort to prevent the destruction of land by communicating what the proper function of land should be. Therefore, the land conflict is equally about what the usage of land should be, and this is indeed a question of politics.

Gregory argues, when speaking of goods, i.e. land and their landowners, we must talk of guardians. He claims that the status of a guardian is ascribed, and not achieved (Gregory 1997, 79), and he clearly has the role of inheritance in mind when discussing this. It is true that land is passed through generations through inheritance in Corsica, and that this has implications for the farmers, but it is also being sold or given away. In this context, mayors have the power to decide who should cultivate land. I will therefore consider local politicians as another form of guardians in Corsica. Moreover, as a good is per definition a scarce resource, it needs a guardian “whose job it is to give access to those who reciprocally recognize his right to act on their behalf” (Gregory 1997, 89). A guardian inscribes the usage of land on the basis of her own values and seeks to reflect these values in the work of the cultivator, be that a farmer or a developer. Finally, these processes are an implication of a system where the guardians of land are different from those who produce commodities. The guardians of land are thus the politicians, while the farmer or the tourist sector use the land to produce commodities. Although one might object that it is an exaggeration to define the role of politicians as guardians as this is rather an ideal type, I still maintain that we may fruitfully ascribe this analytical category to the politicians in Corsica considering their central role in giving either developers or farmers access to land.

The politicians in Corsica (or anywhere else) are thus defining the dominant value through their politics and actions. As Macpherson argues, “a system of property rights is an

instrument by which a society seeks to realize the purposes of its members, or some of the purposes of some of its members” (Macpherson 1978, 13). We shall see that this is exactly what the Corsican politicians struggle with, i.e. the realization of the purpose of the farmers and those of the tourist industry. The politicians are thus juggling two contradicting values seen as paramount by most humans. The question becomes, what sorts of values are then dominating the politicians in Corsica? How do they justify the usage of land? Although I never got “backstage”(Goffman 1971) and witnessed any such occurrences myself, I was told stories on how the power of local politicians had ambivalent and contrasting effects on the farmers. Therefore, to illustrate further I would like to use the mayor of *Lesia* and her statements in the documentary as an example. Here are some examples of how she chose to express “ecological” values in the film:

When I was elected mayor I'd already elaborated a zoning document (document d'urbanisme) because there hadn't been one before. I think that had to be done to regulate things and prevent certain excesses to avoid speculation, a communal map to define where you can build and where you can't. You'll have gathered I don't like concrete (beton, i.e; urbanisation) (laughing) because otherwise you'd be “anything goes”, houses on hillsides, total chaos. We were lucky to find 17 landowners and in such a small village finding that many who would come together and work in the same direction, it's very important. I can't say it's always been easy, but I'm not trying to be popular (je suis pas là pour être populaire...) I'm there for (Je suis là pour...)(pausing) As soon as a collectivity forms, as soon as there's a consensus among the population you have to draw your little hesitations back.

The mayor has done important work together with other landholders, creating an association that enables farmers to rent land, which is how Christine had the opportunity to get settled as a farmer. She asserts that she does not like “concrete”, by which she means that she opposes the urbanization of the coastline. Later in the film, they show a meeting with “ODARC”. This is a political organization working for farmers, granting them support and so on. Again, the mayor argues in a manner consistent with ecological values; “There's a choice. What do we want for the region? For the village? For Corsica? I like to quote Saint-Exupéry, ‘We don't own the earth, we're borrowing it from our children. So let's cultivate our gardens.’” She receives a wide applause for this speech. However, when I watched the movie with Christine she grunted at this scene. She explained how the mayor shows one face in

front of the camera, but acts quite differently otherwise. “Proof” for her ambivalent behavior was proclaimed through her actions towards Nadine:

Nadine lived in a trailer on a piece of land she temporarily “borrowed” from Lucille. She has two trailers, one for her husband and daughter who is five years old, and one for making bread. This is a temporary solution, and she had to find new land to rent by the fall. Before she moved to her trailer, Nadine stayed with Christine for a while, whilst making a profit on selling her bread. After staying there for a while, the mayor threw her out of Christine’s farm, “only one month after she bought bread from me and announced how good everything was.” Nadine explained further that “the mayor said that Christine had people there illegally and that I cannot continue staying there. Now, she regrets that. She sees that I have a real project. They have written about me in the media. That shows that people may do real projects even though you live in a trailer.” Christine points out that *Lesia* is a very beautiful village and is thus portrayed a lot in the media, and since the mayor really wants the media here she takes every chance she gets. I say that it is weird she is portrayed one way in the film, but acts quite differently otherwise. Christine says she wasn’t like that in the beginning, but it changed after some time. “I don’t think the role of mayor is straightforward. With the littoral speculation in mind, she is probably harassed by people and pushed on the usage of land.”

I contend that mayors have a difficulty juggling between ecological values and the economical values, between a real desire to conserve the coast and to develop it for profit. As Constantly argues; “If the mayors take the risk of voting for illegal development plans, it is because they are often subjected to intense pressures from the administrators who are thirsty to transform their natural land plots to urbanized areas” (2012: 160, *my translation*). Hence, I do not believe that these are rational decision makers where every move is calculated with only profit in mind. I do believe that many identify with so-called ecological values, but are being pressed or challenged at the practical level of decision making at an everyday basis.

Indeed, as discussed in chapter two, the “neo-clanism” with the according criminal activities is closely intertwined with political life in Corsica. However, as these activities are hidden in the structures of society, we are only left to wonder whether certain politicians are themselves involved in speculation. Christophe explained the situation in the following manner; “Those who do not want to build on their land will get shot, all the good guys get killed in Corsica. If you say no to sell, then poof! You are dead.” On the 23rd of March 2014, the Corsican politician Jean Leccia was killed in Ajaccio, Corsica (AFP 2014). I talked to Michelle about the incidence a few days later, “we’re not even surprised by it anymore,” he

tells me. “It is cases like that, when you resist selling land, and you are in danger”. I was explained that landholders or politicians who fight to preserve land and do not wish to construct, put themselves in danger of the local elites. Considering this situation, one may conclude that ecological values need to be quite strong in order to resist this structure of violence. One politician with such strong values is the mayor of Sisco in Cap Corsica. He explains his situation in the documentary “Murder Island”: “the threats are pretty simple. Sometimes they want to kill you because you are clearly in the way. We annoy certain people. Then it’s phone calls. You never know who’s on the end of the line. But if those threats scare you, if those threats make you back down, that’s when you’ve lost the battle.” He further explains his motivation for preservation rather than development; “and what we want to do is to protect these wild landscapes, these landscapes which have remained as God made them. If they come here they’ll make it into a Côte d’Azur and if they did that it would be really a catastrophe.” Thus, although the mayor has been subjected to serious pressure, his ecological values and identification with Corsican landscapes supersede the fear.

Other mayors emphasize the possibility of developing tourism and agriculture simultaneously. In the ODARC meeting, the mayor of Lesia argues: “For 40 years in Corsica it’s been tourism or agriculture? No! It’s tourism AND agriculture.” In an equal manner as the people at the agricultural chamber, she is trying to portray a development path where it is possible to integrate both activities, thus getting both of the values enacted. In the interest of governing, they are forced to balance a focus on economic development and ecological preservation, and are thus running the risk of getting stuck in the “double bind” created by the littoral law.

There are positive examples of politicians prioritizing ecology and consequently working together with the farmers in order to use the land for agriculture. Lucille explains how she got her current land plot in the documentary; “I’ve been looking for a piece of land to set up market farming for 5 years. I met with the mayor 4 years ago, and I gave him my proposal. They were interested right away because the village has been trying to settle farmers on these lands. They’ve bought up as much land as they could, either to help the farmers they already had or to bring in some fresh blood. So I came to see this plot of land, it was great, and it’s mine for nine years”. The mayor of this village has a strong interest in establishing the farmers. I visited her farm, and there were several farmers settled here, side by side. This shows how the ecological values of the mayor can have a direct influence on the farmers’ situation. What we see in Corsica are politicians who are unsure of their own value hierarchy, as they cannot decide upon which function the land should have. These local

politicians are therefore stuck in a double bind, between their desire for preservation and economic development. I argue that the only way out of this double bind for the politicians is to properly define their value hierarchy, that is, clearly articulate which value should dominate and encompass the other. If this is clear, the task of defining the usage of land becomes much easier.

Land as the supreme Good of Humanity

It's like the frog you put in boiling water. It will jump out right away. But if you put it in cold water, and gradually increase the temperature, it will not move and die without understanding what's happening. This is what's happening to us people.

Gilles

The existence of a land conflict over the usage of the littoral is at the heart of the interface between tourism and agriculture. This is mainly a conflict over whether organic or economic values should be considered when deciding on the usage of land. In capitalist societies around the world, we see a tendency towards economic values dominating the actions of politicians in defining the usage of land. The dichotomy of economic versus ecological values corresponds to what Parry and Bloch (1989) denotes a short-term versus a long-term transactional order. They argue that the long-term cycle is always associated with concepts of morality, while the short term cycle “tends to be morally undermined since it concerns individual purposes which are largely irrelevant to the long-term order” (26). They argue further that we may have an internal divide between these two orders in all societies, “in which impersonal, competitive individualistic behavior is the norm, and a long-term order in which the stakes are the reproduction of the moral values of the society”(Parry and Bloch 1989, 29). The authors maintain that traditionally it has been the long-term moral values that have secured the reproduction of societies, however, as Chris Hann (1998, 32-33) points out, they lightly touch upon the idea that in today's capitalist world, “we may inhabit a unique form of human society, in which the values of the short-term order have expanded to colonize and efface the long-term order” (Parry and Bloch 1989, 29). Indeed, they further argue that “what has uniquely happened in capitalist ideology (...) is that the values of the short-term order have become elaborated into a theory of long-term production” (Parry and Bloch 1989,

29) where the short term values have ended up “encompassing” the long term values, in Dumont’s words.

This reversal of values may be located at the littoral coast, and I argue, following Chris Gregory, that it is the land’s potential of realizing values of short and long-term order that makes land “the supreme good of humanity at large” (Gregory 1997, 114). The current dominance of short-term economic values in the usage of land corresponds to Chris Hann’s argument, whilst analyzing Polanyi, that “the later ideological predominance of private property in capitalist society is emblematic of ‘disembedding’”(Hann 1998, 33). According to Hann, the problem for Polanyi was an economy “that had escaped from the social and political controls in which it had been embedded prior to the emergence of the self-regulating markets of industrial capitalism” (Hann 1998, 42-43). Hann argues further that this disembedding of the economy can “be understood as the triumph of the “short term transactional order”” (Hann 1998, 43). As a contrast, in societies outside capitalism, the economy is “embedded” in society, and “the pursuit of self-interest is discounted and collective goals are accorded primacy over those of the individual” (Parry and Bloch 1989, 25). It was these “embedded societies” that Mauss was in fact searching for. We have thus witnessed processes where the moral long-term aspects of property relations have weakened and the short-term gains have overwhelmed long-term values (Hann 1998, 33).

I argue that the organic farming movement in Corsica is part of a movement that tries to reverse what I denote as “the value hierarchy of capitalism”, where economic values dominate and encompass ecological values. The organic farmers are thus trying to “re-embed” long-term ecological values into the function of the land. This process of re-embedding the economy into the function of land may again be seen as an effort to shape and define the landscape. By trying to get the politicians to favor ecological values, they are part of a movement that seeks to reverse the value hierarchy of capitalism globally. I see this type of solution as an “organic solution” where the focus is on changing the underlying problems of the capitalist system. Corsica as a place of doing this is especially suitable considering the metaphorical value of Islands as places of utopia. In the interface between agriculture and tourism we are thus seeing processes of “disembedding” and “reembedding” the economy through a fight to implement long-term values into the usage of land. This corresponds to what Marc Edelman has called the farmers’ fight for a “moral economy reembedded in society-albeit global society” (Edelman 2005, 341).

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the value conflict between agriculture and tourism may be located at the littoral coast as it is this land they are fighting over. I have argued that land should be viewed as a good through which the actors may materialize their value. Politicians in this regard have the power to decide what we should use land for, and thus to decide upon the reigning values in society. However, since they have a wish to both conserve the land, and to develop it, they often cannot decide upon which function land should ultimately serve. In consequence, they may find themselves stuck in a double bind that can only be resolved once they solve their priorities in their value hierarchy. It is this value hierarchy that the farmers are trying to reverse by “re-embedding” the moral long-term values into the land and thus into the economy.

Concluding remarks: Corsican responses to an overheated world

The process of shaping and molding the Corsican landscape throughout history has led to the current land struggle between the domains of tourism and agriculture. The last 50 years of tourist developments has left a discernible trace on the Corsican landscape through the consequential pressure on land usage. However, the nationalist movement and its environmental stance have also succeeded in preserving the majority of the “savage” and beautiful nature of Corsica. I have argued that we may fruitfully regard the identity of Corsica as being an “organic island”. This has further made the island a suitable place for organic farmers to live out their “global dreamtimes of environmentalism” (Heatherington 2010, 21) where the locality of the Corsican landscape is used to express universals about the environment. It is this expression of universals that defines the organic community through its opposition to industrial agriculture and the following economic values. I have claimed that the organic values of the farmers may be defined in regard to specific waste practices and consciousness around local scale. As an extension of this logic, the farmers are trying to live outside of capitalism through a peculiar form of communism. The organic farmers are thus a group of people conscious of the environment through preservation practices.

By scrutinizing the disturbance and the making of the Corsican landscape through the current value friction between tourism and agriculture in Corsica, I claim that the organic movement in Corsica is a movement trying to preserve the landscape of Corsica, understood as the sum of the natural surroundings of humans as well as the activity that it constitutes. The farmers aim to not only preserve the physical surroundings, but also to undertake the activities they view as embodying this preservation; namely organic farming. Organic farming is by consequence understood here as a local domain that has mostly beneficial, or at least protective effects, on the Corsican landscape.

In this thesis, I have asked what values, practices and actions concerning Corsica as a landscape emerge in the interface between organic farming and tourism in Corsica. Based on my understanding of tourism as a global domain that has mostly detrimental effects, or at least transformative effects, on the landscape, I argue that in the interface between organic agriculture and tourism, a conflict between economical and ecological emerges. However, we have seen that although most of the farmers oppose the tourist industry, their positioning within the capitalist system leads many to agri-tourism as it unites the ecological values with the economic values. Agri-tourism may be understood as a way to simultaneously preserve

the Corsican agriculture, and thus its landscape, and to develop the tourist sector. I have argued that agri-tourism as a solution to the dilemma of ecology and economy may be seen as but another technical solution that conforms to the logic of capitalism.

An alternative solution to this dilemma is to directly address the question of land usage. I have shown that in the interface between agriculture and tourism disagreements emerge around the definition of land and its usage, and thus which values land should materialize. Moreover, we have seen that the interface between agriculture and tourism in Corsica may be located in the geographical space of the littoral as both domains have a desire to use this space in order to realize their endeavors. Land is therefore the means to realize their specific values. Defining land usage is a task for politicians, who have the power to define land and consequently, whether it shall be used for construction or agriculture. I argue that local politicians are often stuck in a “double bind” between the desire to develop and the desire to conserve land. Thus, both the organic farmers and the local politicians are stuck in a dilemma between these two values. I see the double bind between economic issues and environmental issues that both local politicians and organic farmers face, as emerging from these actors’ positioning in a capitalist system. Shorty put, this whole conflict is situated in a system dominated by “economic” values that encompass and dominate the ecological ones.

The dichotomy of economic versus ecological values corresponds to what Parry and Bloch (1989) denotes as short-term and long-term transactional order, and I contend that it is the land’s potential of realizing values of short and long-term order that makes it “the supreme good of humanity” (Gregory 1997: 114). I maintain that through the interface between organic farming and tourism, namely land, emerges a fight between processes of “re-embedding” and “dis-embedding” the economy. Corsica is a society where, as everywhere else, the short-term transactional order has encompassed and overtaken the long-term transactional order. However, as a lot of the land still remains untouched, through this potential, land inhabits possibilities for realizing different values. I argue that in the interface between agriculture and tourism, in order to save the Corsican landscape from the short-term transactional order of tourism, the organic farmers attempt to “re-embed” the economy by implementing the long-term transactional order as the valid one. The implicit goal may be to make sure that long-term values once again dominate society. The organic farming movement in Corsica is thus part of a movement that tries to reverse the “value hierarchy of capitalism” in their favor, and tries to define the landscape by “re-embedding” long-term ecological values into the function of the land.

Conflict over land usage may therefore be seen as an expression of the value clash and the crisis of what to do with the earth in the future. Although this is clearly a local question, this fight has echoes globally. The discussion of what values our land (or earth) should materialize is a discussion that reaches far beyond the island of Corsica. I understand the activities from the farmers as efforts of “cooling down” in a world that is viewed as “Overheated”, i.e. a world characterized by accelerated change (Eriksen 2012). Humans are currently like the frog trapped in a pot, which is increasingly turning warmer, unaware of the proximity of the boiling point. A way of trying to cool down our planet, is thus through a focus on an environmentally friendly management of the landscape, instead of focusing merely on economic development.

However, is this logic of landscape management at all possible in a world where crisis is dominating and the majority of the people are most of all concerned with putting food on their plates? After all, I am not suggesting that the final panacea for the crisis of our overheated planet is situated in the farmers’ choice of doing organic farming on an island like Corsica. Is it then at all possible to transfer the case of Corsica to the global value crash between environmental and economic irreconcilables? Maybe the answer lies in Bateson’s insight that instead of searching for answers in technical solutions we should be scrutinizing the underlying causes of our deep-seated crisis. Perhaps, by approaching the global crisis with *wisdom*, we will see that economic and ecologic values are not opposites at all, but are rather two parts of a balanced whole. Rather than aiming for a technical fix dominant in capitalist societies, these contentious and difficult questions must be dealt with at a political level and cannot solely be in the hands of disperse social groups fighting to reverse the global value hierarchy. Only time will show whether the process of molding the global landscape will finish in equilibrium between these apparently opposing values.

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